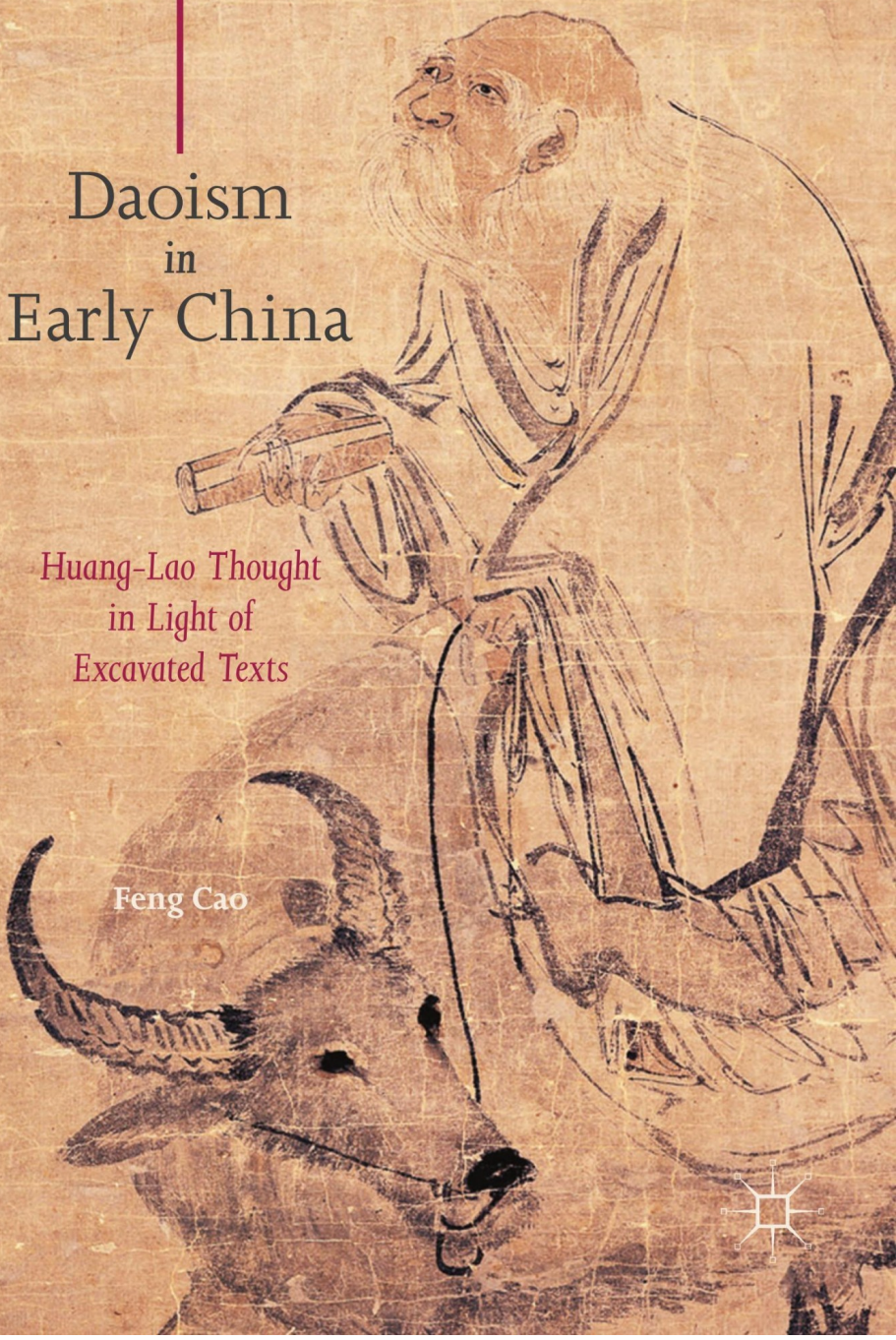
Daoism in Early China

Huang-Lao Thought in Light of Excavated Texts

Feng Cao



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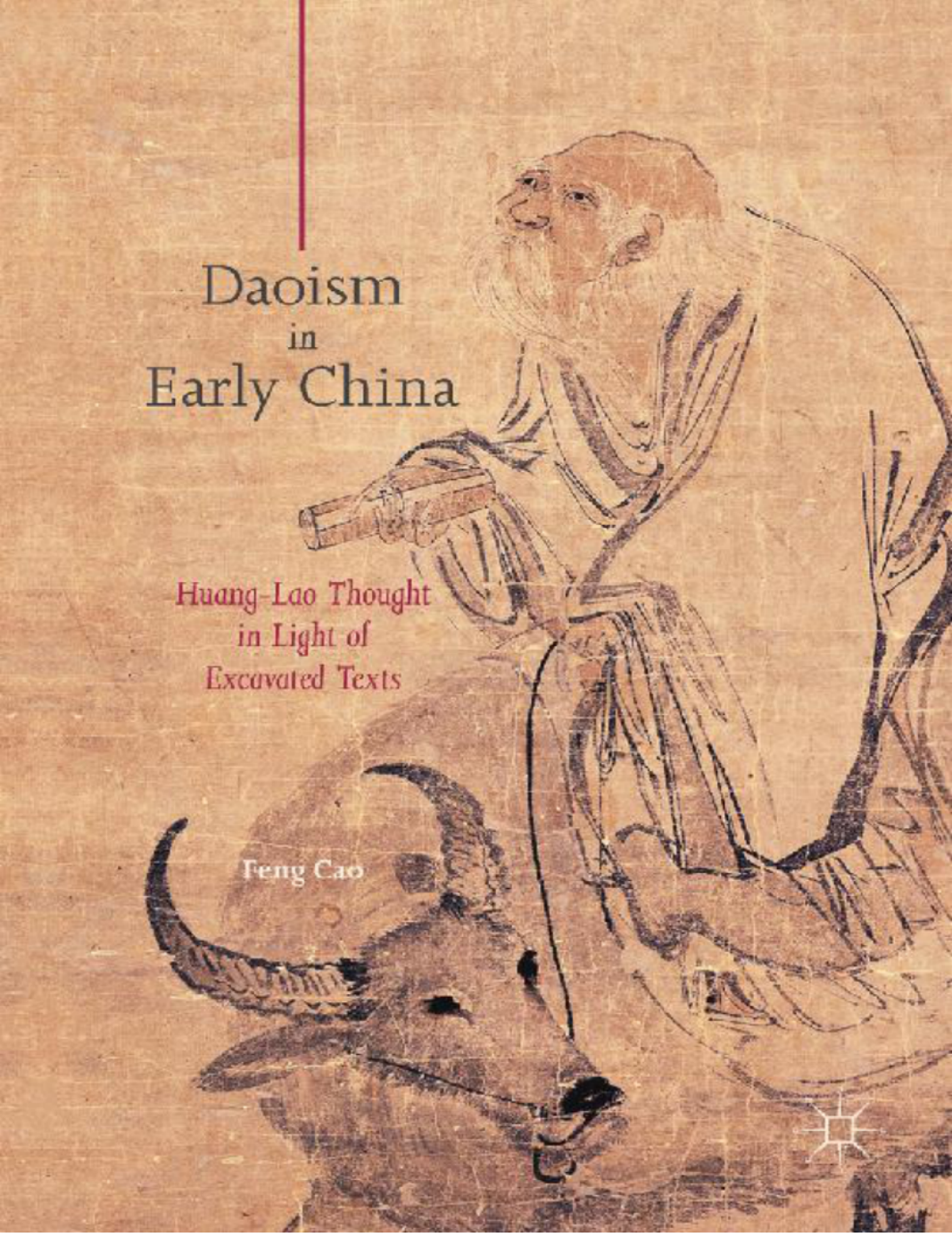

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Huang-Lao Thought in Light of Excavated Texts

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Feng Cao
Beijing, China
April 2017

谢辞

本书的主要译者是中国人民大学哲学院博士生 Callisto Serle 和北京大学哲学系博士生 Sharon Y. Small, 最后统稿由 Sharon Y. Small 负责。两位女士的专业都是中国哲学,并专攻先秦秦汉思想。所以由她们翻译非常

合适。翻译是一项既耗费精力又耗费时间的工作, 在此向她们认真和辛苦表示衷心感谢。

香港大学哲学系 Donald Sturgeon 先生曾经参与过此书的翻译。我必须在此记录他的名字,并向他表示谢意。

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以戴卡琳教授为主编的《当代中国思想 *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 》杂志, 曾于2013年秋季号刊登过我的论文 《Huang-Lao Thought and Folk Techniques and Calculations: Using Clues from Excavated Texts》, 在征得戴卡琳教授以及杂志主办方的同意后, 我将此文纳入到本书中, 并将译者 Jeffrey Keller 也列入本书译者名单中, 在此也谢谢戴卡琳教授和 Jeffrey Keller 的慷慨。

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曹峰

2016年4月18日于北京

Translator's Introduction

Sharon Y. Small

Professor Cao Feng's book deals with excavated texts not previously available in the West. Those texts considerably add to our historical, philological and philosophical insights on a sparsely understood period. While working with excavated texts, the original bamboo slips contain many characters that are not easy to decipher or are missing characters that the author is required to fill in on his own. In some cases, the author offers his own interpretation of those characters; sometimes this is not possible. In such instances, there is no choice but to leave them untranslated and note that the character in question is unknown. The original graph is included and no English translation offered.

The translation of passages from the classics follows the author's own interpretation and rarely employs existing translations. As translation is interpretation, I do not interpret the classics and as faithfully as possible render the quotes selected by the author. Where there is any mismatch between the original classical passage and the English rendering, the blame is solely mine.

Since there is no consensus regarding titles, I have chosen to leave them in Chinese transliteration into Pinyin, giving an English translation only as an option on their first appearance. The reasons for this are manifold. As is well known in academic Sinology, titles of classical texts are given in retrospect either by the name of the author or by the first two to four words in the text. There is a large debate regarding these titles and their meanings. Translating each title would presuppose a finite definition causing them to lose their openness of possibilities. As the texts discussed in this book are mostly excavated texts, their authorship is unknown (therefore the former option for titling is out of the question), and the characters at the beginning if the text are in some cases open to debate. For example, the title of the *Hengxian* (恒先) could be translated as "Primordial Constancy." We would then lose other possibilities embodied in the two words *heng* and *xian* . Moreover, this would neglect the possibility that the *heng* character does not mean "constancy," but rather stands for *ji* (极), meaning "extreme." Although reading *heng* as "constancy" makes perfect sense in the text, one look at the original bamboo slip and this certainty is lost. There are other examples.

The case becomes more complicated in regard to the *Huangdi Sijing* (黄帝四经). It is composed of four texts and there is considerable academic debate about its title. Do the four texts form one or should

they be treated separately? Do they reflect the thought of the Yellow Emperor, or is the Yellow Emperor a mythological entity with no thought to actually reflect? Therefore, translating this title into “The Four Canons of the Yellow Emperor” would not only be misleading and irresponsible, but would also be a historical definition, which is outside the aim of Prof. Cao Feng’s book.

Beijing, China
February 2017

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1. Introduction: On the Huang-Lao Tradition of Daoist Thought

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Huang-Lao Daoism was a prevalent mode of thought or temporal discourse that was broadly popular and highly influential for the considerable period of history spanning from the Pre-Qin period to the Wei-Jin periods. Although no longer the mainstream discourse or mode of thought after the Wei-Jin periods, Huang-Lao Daoist thought never wholly departed from the minds of the Chinese literati, and its subtle influence continued to operate beneath the surface, having far-reaching effects that cannot be overlooked. This is Huang-Lao Daoist thought—a political philosophy guided by Daoist principles; a mode of thought rich in its theoretical aspects yet also highly practical. Although the Daoist philosophy grounded in the *Laozi* (老子) and *Zhuangzi* (莊子) texts was full of profound philosophical principles, it failed to offer examples of how to put these principles into practice in the real world, whereas Huang-Lao Daoist thought presented a holistic approach, grafting aspects from the Schools of Names and Legalism onto the main trunk of Daoism, with the School of Yin-Yang providing structural elements, whilst avoiding negation of the established mainstream culture by maintaining an emphasis on the educational ethics of the Confucians. With an eye to establishing realistic values and order, Huang-Lao Daoism grew to become a highly feasible and implementable system of political philosophy. The Huang-Lao tradition moves the School of Dao “from the direct negation of

authoritarianism to a new means of taking authority (or neo-authoritarianism),"[1] thereby realizing a shift from independent roots to imperially sponsored scholarship of Daoist thought. One might draw a parallel with modern times: the inclusive approach of Huang-Lao Daoism may be compared to a phrase often encountered in Mainland China today, that the country adopts a system, "led by Marxist theory and practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics" where Marxism takes the lead, notwithstanding that there are certain characteristics grafted onto it. That is to say that Huang-Lao Daoism had a real presence in its times; it was both a mode of thought actively adopted and practiced by rulers and a theoretical system that was highly influential, whilst also being a very complex mode of thought. Huang-Lao Daoism constitutes a thread running continuously through political philosophy from the Warring States and pre-Qin eras to the Han dynasty. As such, research into Huang-Lao thought is of key importance and holds an extremely important position in understanding the history of Chinese thought overall.

1 Looking at the Basic Characteristics of Huang-Lao Daoism

From a historical standpoint, Huang-Lao Daoism may be separated into three chronological periods: Early, Mature and Latter. Rulers at the beginning of the Han dynasty were devout followers of Huang-Lao and a firm inculcation into the classic texts attributed to the Huang-Lao tradition were a must for all echelons of the ruling classes; being well versed in the practical application of Huang-Lao ideas was also a must. We see that the characters *huang* (黃) and *lao* (老) denoting the figures of the Yellow Emperor and Laozi respectively, as well as the texts and thought attributed to them, appear frequently throughout Han dynasty historical texts.[2] As a result we may see this as the mature period of Huang-Lao Daoism. The description of the School of Dao from the "Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Six Schools" (*lun liujia yaozhi* 論六家要旨) section of the prologue to the *Annals of the Historian* (*Shiji* 史記) written by Sima Qian's (司馬遷) father Sima Tan (司馬談) is generally accepted by the academic world as a plausible description of Huang-Lao Daoism in this early Han period.

> The School of the Dao unifies essence (*jing* 精) and spirit (*shen* 神), ensuring that all actions conform with the immaterial Dao which leads to a state in which all things are in plenty. The technical side of the School of Dao is based upon achieving accordance with the ultimate order and progression of the Yin and Yang principles as practiced by the School of Yin-Yang ,

drawing on the strengths of the Schools of Confucius and Mo Di, taking the essentials from the School of Names and the Legalism. The School of Dao moves forward with the developments of the times, and changes with the world around it, from changing social mores to performing actual deeds, nothing lies beyond its scope. The principles are direct, succinct and easy to grasp, so that one achieves the most by exerting the least effort. The Confucians differ from this in that they believe that the Ruler is divinely appointed to rule over man; the ruler must be active in his ruling whilst the minister passively obeys his rule; the ruler makes the first move and the minister follows his lead. This leads to the exhaustion of the ruler whilst the minister lives a life of leisure. The principle of the Great Dao is to forsake rigid strength and greed, to eliminate intelligence, to put aside such things and instead rule over the kingdom with the techniques of the School of Dao. The combination of essence and spirit (*jingshen*) will become weakened when over-used, the body will become exhausted when over-taxed; there will be no peace when the balance between the two halves is disturbed, and I have never heard of someone enjoying longevity comparable to that of Heaven and Earth in such a state of unbalance.

…

The School of Dao speaks of doing nothing, and also of nothing remaining undone. It is a simple matter to put these principles into practice, although the expression of these principles is obscure. Its teachings are based upon a metaphysical set of theories which guide the technique of according and following (*yinxun* 因循). The School of Dao believes that nothing comes with a fixed tendency, nor are there forms that remain ever unchanging, hence Daoists are able to explore the varying states of all things. Their acts put them neither beyond nor behind others (other *wu* 物), hence they are able to command others. They adhere to a principle (*fa* 法) in the one case, but are not bound by it in others, realizing their achievements by doing what is right for the time; they use a standard (*du* 度) in the one case, but are not bound by it in another, hence they realize harmony with the actual state of all things. Hence it is said, “the Sage Person never ages because he responds to the changing times and shifting trends. The eternal aspect of the Dao is its changes, hence practicing appropriate response is the key to rule.”

With his ministers assembled before him, the ruler ought to make each aware of his responsibilities. When the minister conducts his affairs in a way that conforms to the spirit of his

words, it is called “proper” (*duan* 端), otherwise it is called “hollow” (*kuan* 竅). If one does not listen to hollow words, there will be no dissent, and the difference between the sage and the degenerate will be naturally discernable, as is the difference between black and white. It is only a question of putting these principles into practice; if one is willing to practice them, what could lie beyond one’s ability? Only thus may one’s actions be in accord with the dark and impenetrable Dao. One will be equally able to shine over the kingdom or retreat into namelessness. In general terms, one has life because one has both essence and spirit, these are attached to one’s physical body. If the combination of essence and spirit (*jingshen*) is overused it will become weakened, if the body is over-taxed it will become exhausted, the physical form (*xing* 形) and spirit (*shen* 神) will perish upon separation. Once dead there is no restoration to life, once separated there is no restoration to unity, hence this is a matter that the sage person treats as being of the utmost importance. From this point of view, the spirit is the root of life, whilst the physical body is the vehicle of life. How can one make statements on how one will rule over the kingdom if one is yet to wrestle control over one’s spiritual and physical unity?

(“Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Six Schools,” *The Annals of the Historian*)

Although the “Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Six Schools” describes the six schools, Yin-Yang , Confucian, Mohist, Names , Legalist and Dao (also appearing under the interchangeable name *Daode* 道德) we find that the author expends the greatest effort on the description of the School of Dao, whilst only sketching the briefest outline of the remaining schools, and in each case these outlines are constructed through a comparison of these and the extent to which they live up to the standards of the School of Dao. In the eyes of this author, the selective confirmation of the positive aspects of each of the other schools, and rejection of its flaws, is an accurate reflection of the stance of Huang-Lao Daoism. Therefore, here we will look at the critiques of the remaining five schools in order to construct a more complete picture of Huang-Lao Daoist thought .

The Schools of Yin-Yang , Confucius , Mo Di, Names , Legalism and Dao all pursue the proper means of government, only their theories on the means of accomplishing this are different, and are expounded with different degrees of clarity. Examining the techniques of the School of Yin-Yang , one finds that it is preoccupied with the prediction of good and ill fortune, and relies on a vast array of taboos, leaving one feeling helpless and fearful;

however, the idea of following the order and progression of the seasons maintained by the School of Yin-Yang should not be overlooked.

The School of Confucius touches upon a wide range of subjects but fails to grasp any important principles, causing one to expend much energy and achieve little. Hence, one does not achieve much following the principles of this school. However, its ordering of rites between ruler and minister, father and son, and the differentiation of man and woman and of elder and younger generations cannot be improved upon.

The School of Mo Di is ascetic and difficult to follow, so that one can never successfully apply all of its teachings. However, its principles on strengthening the foundation and reducing expenditure should not be rejected out of hand.

The School of Legalism believes in strict law and harsh punishment, but it is harsh and ungrateful. However, in establishing the nominal roles of ruler and minister there is none to replace it.

The School of Names is constricting and detrimental to honest emotional expression. However, in determining the relationship between names and reality, its teachings must be given serious consideration.

(ibid.)

We believe that these comments act as a manifesto for Huang-Lao Daoism in the Western Han period. Theoretically speaking, this system preserves and maintains central governmental control and the ultimate power of the ruler, whilst seeking to achieve the greatest political returns on the least political capital, as well as being a political philosophy that is ready to adapt to any time and any situation. The practical application of such ideas in Early Han politics confirm that the teachings of Huang-Lao Daoism are effective. This “manifesto” allows us to identify the following aspects of the structure of Huang-Lao Daoist thought.

Firstly, to put the question in terms of the Way or Dao of Heaven and the Way or Dao of humankind: we find that the Dao addressed in Huang-Lao Daoism is no intangible and empty “Way” unconcerned with and detached from the lives of mankind. As a result, Dao in the language of Huang-Lao Daoism is, in many instances, transformed from the incommunicable, unnamable Dao to a perceivable one that can be imitated, while the idea of the Dao of Heaven as absolute and powerful is not at all diminished as a result. These aspects originate in the preference for borrowing and adopting ideas from the School of Yin-Yang . Where it is stated that the Daoists strive to “achieve

accordance with the ultimate order and progression of the Yin and Yang principles" that is, to "follow the ultimate order of the four seasons" (see quotations from the "Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Six Schools" above), they mean accordance with and following the principles and taboos of the natural world.[3] Of course, each school comes with its own views on the Dao of Heaven, but the School of Yin-Yang is perhaps the most representative, containing elements of all of them. Huang-Lao Daoism seeks systematic order, under the condition that the sociopolitical world and the lives of everyday people model their order upon that which comes from the natural world and its cycles. Therefore, if one were to say that Huang-Lao Daoism were a Legalist philosophy (a philosophical system based on the School of Legalism), the necessary condition here again is that the law adhered to is that of Heaven (*Tian* 天). Huang-Lao Daoism inclines towards discussion of the cosmos and the origins of cosmology; however, not in pursuit of physical understanding, but rather in order to obtain a theory of life and government that is a reflection of the cosmos as it interprets it. In the past scholars have often talked about the basic tenet of Huang-Lao Daoism being a fusion of the Schools of Dao and Legalism, or of the full or proper realization of Legalism through Daoism, when in fact this tenet must be interpreted along the lines of a Dao of Heaven leading to a Dao of humankind if we are to understand it properly.

Secondly, we should be aware of the practice of inferring good government (*zhi guo* 治國) from regimens of well-being (*yang sheng* 養生). There is the clear notion that only by engaging with health and well-being practices can a sage person experience and obtain Dao, and so become differentiated from other beings and approach the heights of Dao. Only from this elevated outlook, as one who has obtained Dao, can one also possess the absolute authority that comes with that state, and become the rightfully appointed ruler of the kingdom, rightfully laying claim to the characteristics of ruler, as one whose name and form is not fixed, to exercise one's appointed right to organize and rule over beings that have fixed names and forms. Thereby, health practices are a means to the ends of state government. Alternatively, we might choose to put it as Feng Youlan 冯友兰 did, saying that "the Huang-Lao tradition of the Jixia Academy believed that well-being and good government were two different applications of the same principles."[4] Those principles were: to "unify essence (*jing* 精) and spirit (*shen* 神), ensuring that all actions conform with the immaterial Dao which leads to a state in which all things are in plenty", and "[t]he principle of the Great Dao is to forsake rigid strength and greed, to eliminate intelligence," as Sima Tan wrote; these principles were based on the theory that "[t]he spirit (*jingshen*) will become

weakened when over-used, the body will become exhausted when over-taxed," and the ruler therefore pursues a state of relative leisure whilst the minister sees to daily affairs, so that the ruler may solely occupy himself with "ruling over the kingdom."

The two aspects discussed above are one-way, not two-way processes. With the final results seen in its practical application, the system naturally runs from Heaven to humankind, from well-being to good government. Where there is discussion of the Dao of Heaven, the speaker implies an equally valid application of the discussion to the Dao of humankind; where there is discussion of well-being, applications to good government are also implied; through discussion of the system, its application is alluded to; discussion of non-action implies the action to be taken; criticism is intended to imply constructive comments; transcendence implies the practical and the changeless, in turn, implies the endless changes that complement it.

Thirdly, with its foundations in the theoretical, the technical side of Huang-Lao Daoism concerns the practice of identifying instances of "according and following." This is a point that Sima Tan takes care to clarify. The dual aspects of a theoretical basis and application in according and following are mentioned in practically all works of Huang-Lao Daoist origin. One might be tempted to infer the idea of a Dao of non-action at first glance, whereas in fact this initial impression is driven by profound principles working beneath the surface. That is to say, there is a worldview that includes a divide between Dao and all things (*wu* 物), a system of thought based upon the non-action (*wuwei* 無為) of the Dao and the being-so (*ziran* 自然) of all things; and from this develops the parallels of the unlimited and the limited, the whole and the part, the one and the many, the root and the branches. As with the pairings of the Dao of Heaven and the Dao of humankind, well-being and good government, one can also apply the process to view the empty and void as a precursor and necessary predicate of according and following, with the empty space maintained in order to enable more effective according and following.

Why and how should one put the idea of "according and following" into practice? Detailed and complex answers are offered in the works of the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition, yet they can be divided into one of two kinds, the first being following the Dao of Heaven, which is closely related to the first characteristic discussed above (the relationship between the Dao of Heaven and of humankind); the second is following the nature of things, including human nature, which becomes the basis for a theory of human nature in Huang-Lao Daoism.

Finally, Huang-Lao Daoism adopts an open-minded approach to incorporating content from other schools of thought . This is precisely

why Huang-Lao Daoism is defined in terms of its relation to the other five schools of thought in its "manifesto" above. Huang-Lao Daoism did not pursue exclusive, narrow and political stances, but after performing a critique on the strengths and weaknesses of all five schools, absorbed the parts useful for good government into its own system: hence the prologue reads, "The Schools of Yin-Yang , Confucius , Mo Di, Names , Legalism and Dao (or *Daode*) all pursue the proper means of government, only their theories on the means of accomplishing this are different, and are expounded with different degrees of clarity." In the past, scholars have categorized Huang-Lao Daoism as "a mixture of the 'Hundred Schools'" (*bai jia* 百家); however, this is not an entirely accurate reflection of the situation. To draw such a conclusion, one has to regard the Huang-Lao system purely as a phenomenon, in which case there seems to be little to distinguish between the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition and the Syncretist School (*Zajia* 雜家), so that establishing a separate school of thought understood as working on the same principles as the Syncretists and calling it "Huang-Lao Daoism" would be meaningless.

As the following sections will show, some scholars who are skeptical of Huang-Lao Daoism deny the existence of the tradition for precisely this reason. In truth, inclusivity is an essential characteristic of any major system of thought. From the Western Han dynasty onwards, the Confucians also displayed clear signs of inclusivity, without resulting in a questioning of the validity of their tradition, or raising skepticism towards it. The reasons for inclusivity are presented in the three points above, and therefore any discussion of the true nature of Huang-Lao Daoism ought to begin with these points: of the relationship between the Dao of Heaven and humankind, between well-being and good government and between theory and its applications.

2 Reviewing Past Research and Looking to the Future

That we are now able to account for the characteristics of Huang-Lao Daoism in its mature stage is largely due to a series of texts emerging from excavations, beginning with the 1970s discovery of silk manuscripts at Mawangdui. That is to say that based on the historic account alone, we would be unable to deduce that the "Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Six Schools" is a description of Huang-Lao Daoism, but we are able to draw this conclusion by making reference to the *Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi Sijing* 黃帝四經) text and other excavated texts, four chapters of the *Guanzi* (管子), four chapters of the *Han Feizi* (韓非子), the *Huanianzi* (淮南子), the *He*

Guanzi (鶡冠子), the *Wenzi* (文子) and other transmitted texts. Before the *Huangdi Sijing* and other excavated texts appeared, research into Huang-Lao Daoism always fell short of becoming a serious subject for academic inquiry, for which there may be two reasons. Firstly, the history of philosophy and of thought in general was considerably influenced by Western practices and ideas in the twentieth century. The methodology of research into the history of philosophy under the influence of Western practices took vivid and richly varied phenomenon and placed them into fixed structures, mechanically dealing with difficult items so that the history of philosophy in China could lay claim to only a few meager threads: either the Confucian school comprising the works attributed to Confucius , Mencius and Xunzi or the Daoist school comprising the works attributed to Laozi and Zhuangzi . Giving selective emphasis to key works is a process that we need not argue against today: however we would remark that this approach nurtures the erroneous impression that these main streams of thought, together with their representative works, sprang forth complete, with an established and clear philosophical vision and structure to their ideas, and as a result, other works with more subtle structures and points of view, such as the *Yizhou Shu* (逸周書), *Guanzi*, *Yanzi Chunqiu* (晏子春秋), *Lüshi Chunqiu* (呂氏春秋), *Dadai Liji* (大戴禮記), *Huainanzi* and *He Guanzi* are generally passed over in the selection process as scholars seek subjects for academic research, when in fact, it is these texts that offer the most accurate reflection of their times. With scholars pursuing a notion of “pure philosophical content,” the history of Daoist philosophy has been reduced to the over-simplified thread of the *Laozi* along with the *Zhuangzi* , and the tradition of Huang-Lao Daoism is given very little notice. In fact, it was Huang-Lao Daoism that was the most widespread and representative form of Daoism for the lengthy period running from the Warring States period through the Qin to the Han dynasties. The current notion of the history of Daoist thought or of Chinese philosophy as a whole, one could say, has departed somewhat from the truth of what it sets out to describe.

The second reason is that the precise nature of Huang-Lao Daoist thought, once popular and influential, began to blur and become indistinct as it started to edge off of the main stage during the middle of the Western Han dynasty. Apart from certain policies aimed at healing the wounds of battle, such as advocating “government through non-action” (*wu wei er zhi* 無為而治) and “giving respite to the populace” (*yu min xiu xi* 與民休息 i.e., minimizing state use of labor), which may be classified as Huang-Lao Daoist in spirit, other details regarding the tradition, such as the development of the school of thought , its theories, structure and influence, all became extremely

indistinct. During the twentieth century an earlier generation of scholars, including Meng Wentong (蒙文通) and Guo Moruo (郭沫若), engaged in some groundbreaking research in the field. Meng Wentong's approach was to seek out all references to "the techniques of Huang-Lao," "(studies or schools being) rooted in Huang-Lao," or "speaking of Huang-Lao" from the *Annals*,[5] as well as making a full survey of the works attributed to authors Shen Dao , Tian Pian , Jie Yu , Yin Wen , Song Xing and Shen Buhai ,[6] amongst others, finally reaching the conclusion that there were two distinct schools of Daoism: Southern and Northern. He believed that Huang-Lao Daoism originated primarily in the imperially sponsored Jixia Academy in the north, whose essential precept was "the technique of according and following" (因循為用).[7] Guo Moruo found that in the inscription of the bronze vessel named the Yinzi Vessel of Marquis Chen (陳侯因資敦), there appears a reference to "Our High Ancestor, the Yellow Emperor" (*Gaozu Huangdi* 高祖黃帝). Guo Moruo inferred from this discovery that academic interest in the Yellow Emperor had flourished in the State of Qi (齊), perhaps because of the historical phenomenon of the Tian (田) clan choosing to name the Yellow Emperor as their ancestor in order to validate their deposing the ruling family of Qi, the Jiang (姜) clan.[8] Such scholars, owing to a dire lack of resources on which to base their research, could only draw the most general conclusions, and stood little chance of grasping either the basic form or entirety of Huang-Lao Daoism.

This state of affairs was dramatically altered with the discovery of silk manuscripts at Mawangdui in the 1970s, with texts such as the *Huangdi Sijing* and *Jiuzhu* (九主) seeing the light of day once more. A considerable amount of texts related to the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition appeared, contributing to the first round of genuine interest in Huang-Lao studies . Scholars for the most part treated the *Huangdi Sijing* as a text representing the full maturity of Huang-Lao thought ,[9] and so the curtain officially rose on research into Huang-Lao Daoism , and many dissertations as well as introductory monographs appeared on the subject.[10] One thing that became more certain was the structure and content of Huang-Lao thought, which proved to be much as we inferred in our treatment of the "Discussion of the Fundamentals" above. Although there were varied opinions at the time, the other side of Huang-Lao Daoism—works attributed to the Yellow Emperor or Huangdi (黃帝), and the system of thought contained therein, began to receive attention and became the subject of solid research. However, this rush of interest was not to last long before it began to peter out. We feel that this is mainly because of a lack of new resources: with only the *Huangdi Sijing* to go on, and lacking any alternative works from other time periods for contrast and comparison, the process of

development of and changes to Huang-Lao thought was difficult to map out and grasp in any complete or systematic way. Therefore, past research has for the most part been based on the examination of individual texts or historic individuals (rather than on establishing a timeline and general overview of Huang-Lao Daoism as a whole).

From the 1990s onwards, newly discovered resources have led to a second round of fresh interest in Huang-Lao Daoism . A bamboo-slip manuscript from the State of Chu (楚) was unearthed at the Guodian (郭店) site, entitled *The Great One Generated Water* (*Taiyi sheng shui* 太一生水); in addition a collection of other bamboo-slip manuscripts from the State of Chu in the Warring States period, which are currently held at the Shanghai Museum , were gradually made public, including: *Primordial Constancy* (*Heng Xian* 恆先), *The Three Virtues* (*San De* 三德) , *All Things Flow into Fluid Forms* (*Fanwu Liuxing* 凡物流行) . The Han Dynasty bamboo-slip manuscript entitled *Zhou Xun* (周馴) held at Peking University, although as yet unreleased, is also worth anticipating. The case of Huang-Lao Daoism is an excellent example of the extent to which excavated texts may substantially alter the landscape of the history of thought. With new resources appearing as time passes and providing new material for comparison, our knowledge of the content of Huang-Lao Daoist thought is being filled out all the time and our understanding of it is gradually developing and becoming multidimensional. The excavated texts have also renewed interest in rereading certain transmitted texts such as the *Guanzi, Lüshi Chunqiu, Huainanzi* and *He Guanzi* amongst others, challenging the conceived structure of schools of thought and restoring the academic value of texts once discounted as syncretic works and thus unworthy of serious study.

With the intermittent encouragement supplied by the appearance of newly discovered texts , the time has gradually ripened for a complete and systematic examination of the structure of Huang-Lao thought. Based on previous academic works, this author feels that future research into Huang-Lao Daoism may begin with discussion of some of the following points.

As discussed above, Huang-Lao Daoism is the lingua franca of its time, from the Warring States period, through the Qin and into the Han dynasties. From the Pre-Qin to Wei-Jin eras, Huang-Lao Daoism remained current for a relatively long time. The existing histories of Daoist philosophy or of Chinese philosophy run counter to the true state of historical thought. It is our hope to compose a *History of Huang-Lao Daoist Thought*, a book that no one has undertaken to write as yet. We believe that only after dedicated and persistent interpretation and analysis of the thought contained in excavated and related transmitted texts should one attempt such an endeavor. We believe that such a book would encourage deeper research into Huang-Lao Daoism , but also have wider-reaching effects. The academic results would initiate a macro-adjustment to the basic structure of our understanding of the history of Daoist philosophy, thereby strengthening the position of Huang-Lao Daoism. The case study of Huang-Lao Daoism would encourage academics to reconsider and reflect upon the entirety of the history of early Chinese philosophy as well as encourage us to be aware of and consciously structure the way in which we research and write about that philosophy, enabling us to give the proper amount of attention to topics particular to China such as cosmology, the theory of Dao and of *qi*-energy , of human nature and emotions, thereby restoring a more faithful picture, true to the real nature of Chinese thought. Finally we would hope that such changes would allow those texts that are

challenging to categorize, such as the *Guanzi, Lüshi Chunqiu, Huainanzi, He Guanzi, Wenzi* , and *Liezi*, to become the subjects of serious research.

3 How Does the Idea of a "Huang-Lao Daoist" School Stand up to Scrutiny?

When considering Huang-Lao Daoism as a political theory for use in the real world, one must first look to its applicability and efficacy; it must be able to resolve the problems of the day. Therefore, as mentioned above, it is to be expected that Huang-Lao Daoism shares characteristics in common with the Syncretist tradition; as a result, its sharing certain aspects of its thought or expression with those of other schools is to be expected. In fact, we find that not only the Huang-Lao Daoist school, but all schools of thought in the Warring States period sought to be noticed and to find common ground with other schools, and as a result all are colored by the characteristics of their times. This offers us a snapshot of the state of the art, with different schools vying to be heard, comprising the mutually influential Hundred Schools, with their varied and complex modes of thought. The excavated texts that we see today present these features of variety and complexity in a most vivid way.[11] By contrast, works containing a very pure train of thought and systematic expression of theories are often those that have been edited countless times by later generations, in a process of gradual refinement. However, it is still the case that some scholars deny the existence or validity of clearly defined and separate schools of thought in the Pre-Qin period based on the high degree of variety and complexity seen in the expression of such thought. For example, Li Rui 李鋭 believes that the "Six Schools" are no more than a biased categorization, made by Sima Qian during the early Han dynasty according to his own preferences and inclinations. As a result, for Li Rui, the most important standards for deciding on the existence of a school of thought are that a school should have a lineage and a unique scholarly objective, and of these two standards, the former is the most important.[12] In terms of Huang-Lao Daoism, judged by Li Rui's standards, only the following passage can be identified as being conclusively Huang-Lao Daoist, and all other content must be denied that name.[13]

> Yue Chengong (樂臣公) studied after the Yellow Emperor and Laozi. His most important teacher had the style name Heshang Zhangren (河上丈人). Whom Heshang Zhangren studied under is unknown. Heshang Zhangren passed his teachings to An Qisheng (安期生), who passed them on to Maoxi Gong (毛翕公), who

passed them on to Yuexia Gong (樂瑕公), who passed them on to Yue Chengong (樂臣公), who passed them on to Gai Gong (蓋公). Gai Gong taught in the area of Gaomi (高密) and Jiaoxi (膠西) in the State of Qi and was tutor to Cao (曹) of the State of Xiang (相).

("Yueyi Biographies," *Annals of the Historian*)

We feel that the array of excavated silk and bamboo manuscripts now available allows us to witness the mutually influential, varied and co-existent systems of thought of their time. We believe that schools of thought were not as pure or clear-cut as has been imagined. Authors of such texts and the times they appear in present an indistinct state that is analytically challenging. This does, to a certain extent eliminate the meaningfulness of previously made distinctions, threads and frameworks, leaving us with the stronger impression that there were indeed no "Six Schools" during Pre-Qin times, nor strict delineations between schools at all. From this point of view, Li Rui's opinion appears reasonable. Excavated texts have instigated a reevaluation of the very concept of schools of thought in early China. When we look at Pre-Qin excavated texts, it is difficult to find a reflection of the schools of thought presented by Sima Tan and father-and-son duo Liu Xiang and Liu Xin (劉向 劉歆, authors of the piece on Pre-Qin masters in the arts and literature section of the Han Histories *Hanshu Yiwenzhi* 漢書藝文志); what we see instead are indistinct and in-between states. Excavated texts encourage us to rely less upon ideas of schools of thought in order to make fixed statements about texts; rather they require us to adopt a more cautious attitude, and the only way we can ensure the greatest level of objectivity is to avoid basing our analyses on a framework decided upon in advance. However, this could tend towards unfettered deconstructivism; without the construction of some kind of framework based on the division of schools of thought , we lose all means by which to discuss our subject and are left with nothing to replace it. Although the idea of the "Six Schools" may be a concept of its times and limited in scope, it has nonetheless remained in continuous use for a long period, and been widely accepted as a functional framework. The key would seem to be how we approach and apply the idea of schools; if we see schools as a fluid and mobile concept, we believe the issues with the term will be largely clarified and resolved. If we allow that the idea of the "Six Schools" is a product of its environment, we may also allow that it is not entirely without supporting evidence. If we look at the Pre-Qin excavated texts as a stage in the process of the formation of schools of thought, this not only solves the issue of how to categorize and place these schools, but also allows us to reorganize and reevaluate our views on

transmitted texts that share characteristics with excavated texts. As a means of analyzing and categorizing, the notion of schools of thought is still a practical and useful one. If we were to say that today we have done away with the idea of schools of thought in order to rediscover a more faithful representation of the history of thought, we might however find that effective use of the idea of schools is still necessary in order to discern and organize different trends in thought. Therefore, this author feels that the question is not one of whether or not to make use of the idea of schools of thought, but instead of how to use it. If we approach the existing framework with nothing but criticism and distaste, not only Huang-Lao Daoism, but the master–disciple system of inherited thought as a whole becomes impossible to define. Moreover, if we attempt to distinguish schools only according to the objectives of their thought, then groups such as the Schools of Yin-Yang , Legalism, Names and even the school of Zhuangzi within the Daoist tradition lose their rightful place, leaving the history of the thought of Pre-Qin China like a plate of sand, the grains entirely indistinguishable from their neighbors.

What should be made clear is that where this book uses the term “Huang-Lao”, we are using it in a broader sense to describe a mode of thought, rather than the narrower sense of a school of thought with a distinct lineage. In the “Yueyi Biographies” in the *Annals* , Sima Qian does indeed describe a clear lineage of the “ Huang-Lao School”; however, the same text also uses the term “ Huang-Lao” to represent the broadly popular political thought that existed from the Warring States period, through the Pre-Qin era and into the Han Dynasty, this latter tradition being much richer and broader than the school in its narrower sense. To describe this school of political thought in broad terms, it takes the Dao, as described in the *Laozi*, as its fundamental principle, whilst exploring the Dao of Heaven as a principle for action represented by works attributed to the Yellow Emperor . Throughout this tradition run various parallel structures such as the root and branches, Dao and its functions or Dao and its techniques, and modes of thought related to these structures. With Sima Qian establishing the practice of using a later term to retrospectively categorize previous subjects, we too may conclude that even those texts that make no explicit reference to either Laozi or the Yellow Emperor can be judged to be documents related to Huang-Lao according to their characteristics.

4 A Brief Introduction to the Contents of This Book

The above is this author’s basic understanding of Huang-Lao Daoism;

what follows is a simple introduction to what will be presented in this book. This book intends to examine recently discovered documents that may be seen as belonging to the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition, and this examination is primiraly concerned with literary documents and the thought contained therein. The texts under examination are written in Chu State characters from the Mid-Warring States period and include *Henxian, Sande* and *Fanwu Liuxing* as well as the *Huangdi Sijing* copied in clerical script (*li shu* 隸書) from the early Western Han Dynasty. This author feels that these texts effectively reflect the basic state of Huang-Lao Daoism in the mid-to late-Warring States period.

Our own research in this area began with looking at the structure of characters, parsing, order and interpretation of terms and constructing a basic interpretation of the texts examined. These more basic essays cannot be included in this volume due to considerations of length. My readers may refer to my footnotes to see the groundwork from which we draw our conclusions. For this reason, where we refer to literary research in this book, for the most part we mean the literary structure of each text as we understand it. Our understanding is based in turn upon the comparison between excavated and transmitted texts, and comparing different excavated texts with each other. As far as our research on the thought contained within these texts is concerned, our understanding is based on a thorough understanding of the characters and literary aspects; that is to say our method progresses from the literary text to thought and not the other way round. Beginning with established ideas and interpreting texts to fit those ideas is a methodology we wholeheartedly oppose. Therefore, if we were to sum up the methodology employed in this book in a sentence, it would be “from the characters themselves to the thought held therein.”

Five essays have been selected for this book, which are representative of this author’s work on the subject of Huang-Lao Daoism. The first chapter, “ Huang-Lao Daoism Research in Light of Excavated Texts,” offers overall answers to key fundamental issues. In this chapter the author attempts to answer questions such as:

- If we say that the classical thought of Huang-Lao Daoism shows a movement from a theory of Dao to a theory of politics, then is there such a thing as a theory of Dao and governance after the tradition of Laozi and the Yellow Emperor respectively? If these do indeed exist, then what allows them to be organically combined together to finally form a grand scheme of thought called “Huang-Lao”? When did this combination occur? Which texts represent this latter combination?
- The Yellow Emperor represents one half of Huang-Lao Daoism.

What sort of role does the Yellow Emperor play in this system of thought? What is his contribution to the wide-reaching scale and vivacity of the tradition as well as the practical applicability of it?

These two questions could be elided into a simpler one: how should we perceive the Yellow Emperor within the tradition of Huang-Lao Daoism?

If it can be said that excavated texts have breathed new life into Huang-Lao Daoism research, this author feels that to a large extent that is because we have discovered documents attributed to the Yellow Emperor ; vivid, living texts whose content was greatly influential in the lives of the ancients. We believe that as more and more texts are discovered, a greater number of resources will be accumulated for research in this area.

- Are there characteristics of thought, literary structures or linguistic expressions entirely specific to the Huang-Lao Daoist School?

If these exist, we will have found a marker to enable easy identification of and expanded research into Huang-Lao Daoism.[14]

In the chapter's conclusion, we conclude that there was indeed both a theory of Dao and governance, after Laozi and the Yellow Emperor respectively, during the mature period of Huang-Lao Daoism. These two were organically combined and both share common theories on the structure of the world as well as having varying perspectives on political life. Looking at the texts themselves, these two theoretical approaches do not necessarily appear together in individual texts ; however, in terms of the broader tradition of thought the two systems coexist and are mutually influential and mutually supportive, combining to form a practical and effective theory of Huang-Lao Daoism.

Next, having read and studied a large amount of excavated texts , when we turn to transmitted texts, we find it becomes increasingly clear that it was through the medium of the Yellow Emperor that a system of general principles and taboos of social mores entered into the system of Huang-Lao Daoist thought, making the latter practically applicable as well as imbuing it with a natural trustworthiness and authority. By understanding the importance of the role and function of the Yellow Emperor in the Huang-Lao Daoist theory of Dao we find an entirely logical reason for its full name: Huang-Lao Daoism. Some scholars believe that this inclusion of the name of the Yellow Emperor was merely a device to raise the profile of the school and not a necessary part of its theoretical content.[15] This is, in fact, not the case: it is by virtue of the rules and taboos represented by the Yellow

Emperor that the transition of principles from the Dao of Heaven to the Dao of humankind is fully realized. The authority and applicability of Huang-Lao thought cannot exist based solely upon the expansion of the tradition of the figure and text attributed to Laozi; it can be discovered only through the integration of the content related to the Yellow Emperor . The resources that are attributed to the Yellow Emperor and the thought contained therein are significant, but unfortunately the majority of previous research has remained fixed upon how Huang-Lao thought developed from the tradition of Laozi. Now that more resources have become available, we can begin to produce a more systematic timeline and a more complete framework.

Chapter 2, titled “Huang-Lao Thought and Folk Techniques and Calculations: Using Clues from Excavated Texts ” can be described as follows: the thought of the Laozi school and the contents of the “words of the Yellow Emperor” form the two greatest sources of the Huang-Lao school. However, until this very day, there is an existing asymmetry in scholarship on the two; while there is much research on Laozi and his followers, there is much less on the “words of the Yellow Emperor.” There is a close connection between “the words of the Yellow Emperor” and folk techniques and calculations, thus promoting the thought of Huang-Lao to become a widely accepted and easily operational pragmatic political theory. This chapter takes on three perspectives: through the analysis of the image of the Yellow Emperor , the ideas of “ forms and names” and the “virtue of forms,” and the uniqueness of the language used, we investigate the influence of folk techniques and calculations on Huang-Lao thought.

Chapter 3, “The Literary Structure and Characteristics of the Thought in the Bamboo Manuscript known as *All Thing Flow into Forms* (*F anwu Liuxing*) Housed at the Shanghai Museum ” examines the highly differentiated literary structure of the excavated text *Fanwu Liuxing* and its relation to the transmitted *Laozi* and *Guanzi* texts. We find an intriguing phenomenon shared by texts such as the *Fanwu Liuxing* and *Hengxian*: they both make mention of Dao and share common ground in holding it to be the highest principle. However, this highest principle is often discussed under a pseudonym, such as the Dao or Dao of Heaven (*Tiandao* 天道) , Primordial Constancy (*Hengxian* 恒先), Constancy (*Heng* 恒) or simply One (*Yi* 一) in specific discussions, which cannot be seen as a random coincidence. It is within the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition in particular that we see the otherwise undefined (and indefinable), penumbrous Dao transformed into something that retains the characteristics of being ultimate, authoritative and mysterious whilst also being something that one can imitate, follow, perceive and adopt. As the *Fanwu Liuxing* states, “If one can grasp the One, one hundred matters become assured; if one

cannot grasp the One, one hundred matters will be lost." Hence, in the political theories of the Huang-Lao school, the relationship between the layers of the ontological model of the One and the Many gains a political significance, and becomes the reasoning for establishing a "one ruler over many subjects" model of government.[16]

The One, in this sense, retains the meaning of Dao as the highest authority, but departs from the original theory of Dao with its connotations of the mysterious, distant and vacuous. The *Fanwu Liuxing* clearly states, "Hence the One may be perceived by taste when chewed, by smell when sniffed, by sound when struck; visible in close proximity, it may be put into use, but is lost when clung to, withered when destroyed, eliminated when stolen." What is most surprising is that not only are such comments without equivalent in transmitted texts, but that this is a most clear and distinct indication that the idea of the Dao in Huang-Lao Daoism is something that one may touch and approach. Therefore, the bamboo-slip text *Fanwu Liuxing*, housed at the Shanghai Museum , may be used to explore how Huang-Lao Daoism sets about making the vacuous and unapproachable Dao into the One, something one can actually perceive and put to practical use, as well as how the idea of well-being extends to good governance in excavated texts.

The fourth chapter, "From Auto-creatin to Autonomy: an Analysis of Political Philosophy in the *Hengxian*" also analyses unique literary features in order to uncover the political philosophy specific to Huang-Lao Daoism. The Huang-Lao Daoist School often expounds upon its transference of principles from the Dao of Heaven to the Dao of humankind by drawing upon its cosmological understanding to create a human political philosophy. The *Hengxian* text may be divided into two parts, the first being cosmological theorizing, the second being political philosophy, with the basic thought process being that the principles of cosmological creation provide a structure for the "Wise kings, rulers and scholars" to solve "the issues of the kingdom (or 'all under heaven' *tianxia* 天下) ," with "the names of the kingdom" (and also the achievements, actions and creation of the kingdom) providing guiding principles for governance. It is not difficult to see that the crux of cosmological theory in the *Hengxian* is the quality of self-birth as it applies to related to *qi*-energy. The first part of the *Hengxian* dedicated to discussing the self-birth of *qi*-energy is there in order to allow the second part to draw out a politico-philosophical theory idealizing non-action, so that both parts are closely connected to and mirror each other. This is a distinct characteristic of Huang-Lao thought. When engaged in research on the *Hengxian*, one must follow this thread of thought to its end in order to find its implicit logical framework and draw the correct conclusions.

Both in China and abroad, the majority of scholars are attracted to the first part of the *Hengxian* and its cosmogonic theorizing, and are led from this into lively discussion of the physical ramifications of the specific details of a particular cosmology. This author feels that this is a case of being drawn in by a phenomenon and missing the essential question at hand. It is necessary to avoid awarding special privilege to any specific theory of the creation of the cosmos in the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition; after all, although this is a tradition that has employed all kinds of theories on cosmogony and the principles of the Dao of Heaven, and a wide range of variations on those themes, they are only a means, a path, a tool for ultimately presenting us with a logical rationale for governance in the human realm.

The fifth chapter is titled "The Idea of Names or Naming as one of the Key Concepts in the *Huangdi Sijing*: Discussing the Relationship Between the Concepts of Dao, Names and Legality." In this essay, the author takes the *Huangdi Sijing* silk manuscripts discovered at Mawangdui as an example of Huang-Lao Daoist writings that demonstrates a relatively complete and mature system of thought. There is at present a relative dearth of analyses of the thought presented in the *Huangdi Sijing*, a text which looks at, for example, the Dao of Heaven, Punishment and Names, Punishment and Virtue, the Sage Person and other such topics; academics have reached a point of consensus that the *Huangdi Sijing* is a document that "employs the theories of Dao to improve upon those of the Legalists," and which describes the relationship between Dao and Law, or how Dao is embodied from the universal to the level of law and governance, and how law may be seen as inevitable and reasonable by appeal to Dao (in particular the Dao of Heaven). We do not have a problem with this conclusion, but we feel that there is room for further exploration. It captures our attention that of three major concepts in the *Huangdi Sijing*, Dao, Names and Law, neither Dao nor Law enjoy the same coverage as does the theme of Names. Why should that be? Why should the concept of Names be so integral to the Huang-Lao Daoist system of thought? What made the concept of Names so popular in the mid-to-late Warring States period and what does that have to do with the popularity of Huang-Lao Daoism? A fundamental idea of Huang-Lao Daoism is that the creation of all things stems from the Dao, and that this is a process leading from a nameless, formless Dao towards actual things or beings which have names and forms, with a physical world of phenomena acting as the embodiment of Dao. Mirroring this, the ruler as one who grasps Dao has an important role to play, which is to recognize and maintain a hold over the forms and names of things, and on this basis to create an appropriate system of roles and rules for the human realm, and to then allow this system to operate of

its own accord. This is the point at which Huang-Lao Daoism is more profound than the School of Legalism. It is also a point that academics have largely failed to give the attention it warrants. This essay is aimed at encouraging research to dig deeper into understanding Huang-Lao Daoist thought.

5 Conclusions

After a considerable amount of research into and analysis of excavated texts and related transmitted texts, whether from the perspective of historic records, political application or forms of literary expression and modes of thought, we conclude that the validity of a School of Huang-Lao Daoism is a matter beyond doubt. The framework of changing tides in thought, from the mid-Warring States period to the mid-Western Han dynasty, is becoming ever clearer, supported by the discovery of excavated texts. We feel that, as research into this continues, the following questions are worth discussing further.

Firstly, it is an undeniable fact that Huang-Lao Daoism adopts content from all schools of thought . The process by which this adoption is implemented, however, is still not entirely clear. Meng Wentong said, “Huang-Lao Daoism is the result of a gradual narrowing of the distance between separate schools of thought, rather than of the Daoist School taking theories piecemeal from a variety of other schools.”[17] This statement is reasonable, but leaves room for further inquiry. In the “Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Six Schools” in the introduction to the *Annals* we see the description, “achieving accordance with the ultimate order and progression of the Yin and Yang principles as practiced by the School of Yin-Yang , drawing on the strengths of the Schools of Confucius and Mo Di, taking the essentials from the Schools of Names and of Legalism.” If that Daoist school is in fact the Huang-Lao Daoist school, this clearly indicates that the Huang-Lao Daoism current with the early Han dynasty was firmly based upon an essentially Daoist framework, and did borrow from other schools of thought , which would contradict Meng Wentong’s conclusion. However, from the perspective of the Chu State bamboo-slip texts , there are clear indications of thought processes moving from the Dao of Heaven to the Dao of humankind and from well-being to good governance, without strong indications of a particular school of thought being followed; for example, the *Sande* text includes a description of a prohibitive set of rules called the Rites of Heaven (*Tian li* 天禮), a passage typical of Huang-Lao Daoism, but also reminiscent of parts of the *Shang Shu* (尚書), *Liji* (禮記) and *Dadai Liji*, which has sparked debate over whether the *Sande* is more typical of a Confucian or Huang-Lao Daoist tradition. This reminds us that Huang-Lao Daoism adopted ideas from several schools of thought, and

perhaps did so from the very beginning of its formation, by means of a spontaneous, unconscious method. This differs radically from the description from the early Han dynasty of an essentially Daoist framework allowed to develop through an active and conscious syncretization or the process of adoption of differing aspects of various schools—a method based on real political needs, which adapted useful political theories from various theories on cosmogony and the Dao of Heaven. This is what modern thinkers believe to be the original state of Huang-Lao Daoism. However, it is not necessarily true that in the Warring States period there was also a clear and conscious adoption of any particular thought as its main framework, which means that Meng Wentong has made a very astute observation, when given the proper delineation. In future research we ought to make thorough reference to excavated texts and pay particular attention to observing the process by which Huang-Lao Daoism transforms from its indistinct beginnings to its later, clearer form.

Secondly, owing to the high degree of similarity between the thought in the *Huangdi Sijing* text , the writings of Daoist figures in the imperially sponsored Jixia Academy and the transmitted text *Guanzi*, and the silk manuscripts being discovered at Mawangdui, the origins of the ideas and authors of Huang-Lao Daoist works were swiftly classified as belonging to the Jixia Academy. This was a common belief shared by such scholars as Chen Guying 陳鼓應, Chen Ligui 陳麗桂, Bai Xi 白奚, Hu Jiacong 胡家聰 and others, all of whom devoted time to establishing this view.[18] Bamboo-slip texts from the State of Chu further confirmed this idea of a connection between the author(s) of the *Huangdi Sijing* and the group of authors at the Jixia Academy and of the *Guanzi*, the *Fanwu Liuxing* is an especially good example of this connection. However, the degree of discrepancy between varying theories of creation and of *qi*-energy seems to suggest that the bamboo-slip texts to paint a picture of the variety and complexity in early Huang-Lao Daoist thought rather than pointing towards one common source. The Jixia Academy was a place of conflation and editing; however the degree of these two processes and their objects must be analyzed further as and when more excavated texts become available.

Thirdly, there is the question of when the thought and literary expression of the transmitted edition of the *Laozi* came into being. There are two strong tendencies within the extant *Laozi*: one is distance from all things political, which is achieved through criticism and negation of the real world and a call to return to the transcendent and vacuous Dao; the other is drawing upon a theory of Dao to construct a theory of governance, with an emphasis on explicating Dao or the Dao of Heaven and its decisive impact on society and the

lives of humans. Therefore, to say that there is a reflection of Huang-Lao Daoism in the extant *Laozi* might seem ridiculous, but in fact it is not as peculiar as it might sound at first hearing. In that case, is this reflection part of the original *Laozi* or was the *Laozi* altered following the influence and popularity of Huang-Lao Daoism in political circles? Although this book will touch upon this question, a more detailed and penetrating treatment of the subject should follow in the future based upon the *Laozi* and other Daoist texts , including the excavated *Wenzi* text. We feel this will be of the utmost importance to further exploring the history of philosophy in early China.

Footnotes

1

Liu Weihua 劉蔚華, "The Historic Transition accomplished by Huang-Lao," in Ding Yuanming 丁原明 ed. *Overview of the Huang-Lao School,* Jinan: Shandong University Press, 1997, p. 3.

2

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3

See Wang Zhongjiang 王中江, "Principle of Law Philosophy, Publicity and Ideal of Law's Community in Huang-Lao School—Why is Ruling through Dao and Law," in the *International Conference on Excavated Texts and Ancient Culture*. Beijing: Peking University Press, 2011.

4

Feng Youlan 馮友蘭, *Newly Compiled History of Chinese Philosophy.* Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995, p. 215.

5

The techniques of Huang-Lao (*xue Huang Lao zhi shu* 學黃老之術), (studies or schools being) rooted in Huang-Lao (*ben yu Huang Lao*本於黃老), speaking of Huang-Lao (*yan*

Huang Lao yi 言黃老意).

6

Shen Dao 慎到, Tian Pian 田駢, Jie Yu 接予, Yin Wen 尹文, Song Xing 宋钘, Shen Buhai 申不害.

7

See Meng Wentong 蒙文通, "A Brief Outline of the Huang-Lao Studies ," in his *Zhuzi Philosophy in Pre-Qin Days and Rationalism.* Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2006, pp. 191–223.

8

Guo Moruo 郭沫若, "A Critique of the Huang-Lao Daoist School of the Jixia Academy," in *Ten Critiques* . Beijing: Orient Publishing Press, 1996, pp. 142–173.

9

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Li Rui 李鋭, "Liujia, Jiuliushijia and Baijia; Jiuliu: From a Created Catalog Name to Unreal Historical Facts; A Study on the Judgement of the School Research from the Unearthed Silk-Cloth Slip Documents etc., " in his *School Studies from the Period of Warring States and Qin and Han Dynasties.* Beijing: Beijing Normal University Publishing Group, 2011.

13

Li Rui 李鋭, "Daojia and Huanglao," *School Studies*.

14

With regard to the latter two responses, see my "Huang-Lao Thought and Folk Techniques and Calculations: Using Clues from Excavated Texts," *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 44 (4) (Summer 2013), 46–71.

15

For example Ding Yuanming 丁原明, in *Overview of the Huang-Lao School* (Jinan: Shandong University Press, 1997), claims that most of the texts that refer to the Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi*) in fact use the term as a pretext, and " Yellow Emperor studies" do not have any particular theoretical system—meaning that the characteristic content of Huang-Lao learning is not "Huang" but "Lao". See pp. 21–25.

16

Wang Zhongjiang 王中江, "The Structure of Thought Surrounding Yi and its Position in *Fanwu Liuxing*" and "The Creation of the Cosmos and Humanity in the *Hengxian*," in *International Conference on Excavated Texts and Ancient Culture* (cited above), p. 58, p. 80.

17

Meng Wentong 蒙文通, "A Brief Outline of the Huang-Lao Studies ," in *Zhuzi Philosophy in Pre-Qin Days and Rationalism*, p. 202.

18

See Chen Guying 陳鼓應, *A Modern Commentary and Translation of the Huangdi Sijing —Silk Manuscripts Excavated from a Han Tomb at Mawangdui*; Chen Ligui 陳麗桂, *Huanglao Thought in Qin and Han Dynasties*; Bai Xi 白奚, *A Study of the Jixia Academy*; Hu Jiacong 胡家聰, *The Contention of the Jiaxia Academy and the New School of Huang-Lao.*

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2. Huang-Lao Daoism Research in Light of Excavated Texts

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1 Introduction

The Huang-Lao tradition is a mode of thought that is theoretically sophisticated and highly realistic. A form of political thought with predominant Daoist characteristics, it remained extremely popular from the mid-to-late Warring States period through the Qin and Han dynasties. Although the tradition of Daoism based primarily on studies of the *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi* texts had offered profound philosophical principles, it had failed to offer approaches aimed at the real world. Huang-Lao Daoism adopted aspects of the Schools of Names (*Mingjia* 名家) and Legalism (*Fajia* 法家) into what was predominantly a Daoist system of thought, and further borrowed a framework from the School of Yin-Yang (*Yin-yangjia*陰陽家); it also continued to give weight to the ethical education of the Confucians, thereby allowing existing cultural traditions to go unchallenged. Rather than replacing cultural norms, this tradition had its eye on establishing realistic values and order, realizing a revitalization of Daoist ideas and transforming them into a feasible system of political philosophy. A main stream in the history of political ideas from the Warring States to the Qin-Han dynasties, Huang-Lao thought is an ideal candidate for meaningful research into the history of Early Chinese philosophy.

First, we must clarify what we mean by “Huang-Lao.” In this chapter we are concerned with the main principles of a tradition of thought, rather than a strict line of tutelage. In the “Yueyi Biographies” of the *Annals of the Historian* (*Shiji* 史記, hereafter the *Annals*), Sima Qian does indeed clearly describe the lineage of a School of Huang-Lao thought . However, at the same time the *Annals* also use the term “Huang-Lao” to refer to a system of political thought that existed broadly throughout the Warring States period through to

the Qin and Han dynasties, the scope of which is much wider than that of the School of Huang-Lao in the narrow sense. In the broader sense, we are looking at a philosophical system that is based upon the idea of Dao as expressed in the *Laozi*, with the idea of a Way or Dao of Heaven (*Tiandao* 天道) attributed to and represented by the Yellow Emperor , whose tradition contributes specific principles to guide the actions of humankind. Throughout this system of thought we see parallels drawn with the image of contrast between the root and branches; between the all-encompassing Dao and more specific techniques. With Sima Qian 司馬遷 establishing the precedent of using this later term retrospectively to identify earlier-occurring areas of complimentary thought in history, we find that even texts that make no explicit reference to either Laozi or the Yellow Emperor may yet be classified as "Huang-Lao" materials.

Looking at the range of "Huang-Lao" materials from this perspective, scholars from earlier generations including Meng Wentong 蒙文通 and Guo Moruo 郭沫若 broke new ground in academic research. Meng Wentong presented a thorough analysis of historical figures that the *Annals* referred to as: "the techniques of Huang-Lao" (*xue Huang Lao zhi shu* 學黃老之術), "(studies or schools being) rooted in Huang-Lao" (*ben yu Huang Lao*本於黃老), "speaking of Huang-Lao (*yan Huang Lao yi* 言黃老意)."[1] Guo Moruo focused on the reference to the "High Ancestor Yellow Emperor" in the bronze inscription on the Yinzi Vessel of Marquis Chen (陳侯因齊敦), inferring from this the reasons for the popularity of Yellow Emperor studies in the state of Qi (齊).[2] However, owing to a general lack of resources, these scholars were only able to trace parts of an outline, and were unable to grasp the entirety or fundamentals of Huang-Lao Daoism, which limited the potential for advancement in research in this area.

This state of affairs was dramatically altered with the discovery of silk manuscripts at Mawangdui in the 1970s, with texts such as the *Huangdi Sijing* [3] seeing the light of day once more. A considerable number of texts related to the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition appeared, contributing to the first round of genuine interest in Huang-Lao studies . Scholars for the most part treated the *Huangdi Sijing* as a text representing the full maturity of Huang-Lao thought, and so the curtain officially rose on research into Huang-Lao Daoism . In recent years, newly discovered resources have led to a second round of fresh interest in Huang-Lao Daoism. A bamboo-slip manuscript from the State of Chu (楚) entitled *Taiyi Sheng Shui* was unearthed at the Guodian (郭店) site; in addition the excavated texts the *Hengxian*, *Sande* and *Fanwu Liuxing* and other bamboo-slip manuscripts from the State of Chu in the Warring States period and which are held at the Shanghai Museum were gradually made public. Huang-Lao Daoism is

an excellent example of the extent to which excavated texts may substantially alter the landscape of the history of thought. With new resources appearing as time passes to provide new material for comparison, the content of Huang-Lao Daoist thought is being filled out all the time and our understanding of it is gradually becoming more three-dimensional. The excavated texts have also renewed interest in rereading transmitted texts such as the *Guanzi, Lüshi Chunqiu, Huainanzi* and *He Guanzi* amongst others, challenging the conceived structure of schools of thought and restoring the academic value of texts once discounted as syncretic works and thus unworthy of serious study.

2 Two Types of Theories Regarding Dao and Governance in the *Huangdi Sijing*

Although the documents and systems of thought pertaining to Huang-Lao Daoism appear to vary greatly at first glance, as it is a political theory closely uniting the themes of the Dao of Heaven and the affairs of humankind, with theory and practice closely entwined, it is common practice for scholars to approach it precisely from these aspects: theories of Dao and of governance. However, to simply discuss the existence of these two elements is insufficient; one should also pay mind to identifying clearly what specific form of these theories we are presented with. Based upon years of research into the *Huangdi Sijing*, we feel that it is possible to further identify two distinct and separate themes: theories of Dao and governance after the tradition of Laozi and the Yellow Emperor respectively. This division reflects the basic structure present in mature Huang-Lao Daoist materials , especially the areas related to the Yellow Emperor, which we feel should not be dismissed as a collection of unreliable works, randomly or incorrectly attributed to the Yellow Emperor, but are a collection of texts with a specific content and practical functions.

What we must clarify here is that these two separate styles of theories after the traditions of Laozi and the Yellow Emperor were not necessarily present at the beginnings of Huang-Lao Daoism , but rather can be identified as taking shape at the turn of the Qin to Han dynasties in the *Huangdi Sijing* text.[4] Despite the fact that there are no explicit references to be found of the Yellow Emperor saying one thing and Laozi saying another, enabling us to form an obvious distinction between the two, we can still distinguish and identify two clear, significant traditions, and for the sake of simplicity we may refer to them as being based on the Laozi or the Yellow Emperor type. Although this structure is clearly visible in the *Huangdi Sijing*, we feel that it is missing the mark slightly to suggest that two separate

theories of Dao and governance exist and in places interact within the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition. To see the structure as two sides of the same coin, and that different texts incline more towards one or the other may be a more accurate description. For example, within the *Liezi* 列子 we see reference to an apocryphal *Book of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi Shu* 黃帝書), whilst the contents of these references may also be found in the transmitted *Laozi*. In addition, the transmitted *Laozi* contains no shortage of discussion on the Dao of Heaven; and so we see that there is a certain amount of interaction between textual lineages. An ideal focus for our research would be to pinpoint how the two traditions within Huang-Lao Daoism gradually clarified and became distinct from each other; such research would rely on excavated texts for supporting evidence.

The theory of Dao is the basis of Huang-Lao Daoist philosophy. In the *Huangdi Sijing* text we see the world as a whole, including human society, arranged according to the parallels of Dao and things (*wu* 物), the metaphysical and physical, the essential and phenomenal. Dao is the original source, pre-existing the "ten-thousand things," and at the same time is the ontological entity that allows for their existence. This relationship is discussed at length in the "Daoyuan" chapter of the *Huangdi Sijing*. The first half of the "Daoyuan" chapter focuses on cosmological theory, describing the entity Dao as nameless and formless, independent and alone, whilst the ten thousand things derive their creation from it and "one hundred matters" come about as a result of its metaphysical characteristics. The second half of the "Daoyuan" chapter turns to how the sage person embodies and utilizes Dao in order to realize the political motive of "embracing Dao, grasping the measure, making the kingdom be as one (unified)." Quite clearly this is inherited directly from the *Laozi*, which emphasizes Dao as the highest entity and accentuates the decisive nature of Dao on society and human lives. Here we will call this idea "A Theory of Dao after the Tradition of Laozi." This notion of Dao provides a rationale for the existence of the ten thousand things as well as for how the sage person (often referred to as "one who grasps Dao" in the *Huangdi Sijing*) rises to stations of political power and realizes the political aim of unifying the kingdom, making this theory a significant one.

Although this concept of Dao is important within the *Huangdi Sijing* , it appears not to be the ultimate point that the text seeks to emphasize. Another model of Dao catches our attention, which we might simply call that of the Dao of Heaven. This theory presents Heaven, Earth and humankind as interrelated parts of a whole, indicating ideal political actions in the human sphere according to the order of the universe. There are frequent references to the Dao of Heaven and Earth in the *Huangdi Sijing*, sometimes referring to the

movements of the sun and moon, the changing of the seasons and other natural phenomena, or to the universally applicable principles (*li* 理), numbers (*shu* 數) or order (*ji* 紀) that they represent; sometimes it refers to the universal principles of the interdependent changes of Yin and Yang , changes of movement and stillness, waxing and waning, hardness and softness interacting, all of which are aspects of the Dao of Heaven that the ruler must recognize and manipulate. By comparison with the abstract Dao that is unperceivable and impenetrable to the average individual, the Dao of Heaven is a form of Dao that all might perceive, as well as consisting of the rules and principles (*faze* 法則) of the heavenly bodies that all are subject to. Therefore, the Dao of Heaven has a form that may be directly perceived whilst still sharing in the authority and ultimate qualities of Dao; as a result, adhering to the Dao of Heaven becomes the most direct and effective means of controlling the kingdom. The most important political task for the sage person is to model their own actions after Heaven and Earth to approach mastery in the human realm, inferring and perfecting a set of rules for governance and principles of right and wrong from the order of the universe that permeates the realms of Heaven, Earth and humankind. As a result, this theory of Dao is a more practical one than that modeled after Laozi.

Discussing a Dao of Heaven that presents itself as the order or principles of the universe, and employing the process of inferring a Dao of humankind from the Dao of Heaven, are phenomena we find in transmitted texts such as the *Guanzi*, *Lüshi Chunqiu*, *Huainanzi* and *Heguanzi*. By taking these as a selection of complementary materials, we find that the Dao of Heaven is a view of the universe that encompasses all things and has constant and permeating principles closely related to knowledge, technical expertise, taboos and rules. The Yellow Emperor holds an undeniable position,[5] for it is with him that this faith, obedience to rules and avoidance of taboos is directly associated. The Yellow Emperor appears frequently in this role in the *Huangdi Sijing*: for example in the “Guan” subchapter of the “ Shiliu Jing” chapter, the Yellow Emperor plays an important part in the creation process of Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang, the seasons, darkness and light and the ten thousand things. In the “Liming” chapter of the same chapter we see the quote, “The Yellow Ancestor of old kept close to the Dao and insisted upon trust, he divined symbols based upon his own form, with four faces facing in all four directions and his heart-mind saw clearly, and with a clear heart-mind he observed the four directions. Central to the four directions, he drew from the Heavens for symbols (*xiang* 象), from the Earth for measures (*du* 度), from humankind for laws (*fa* 法). This he maintained

throughout his reign, hence he was able to become the ancestor of the kingdom).” This confirms that the image of the Yellow Emperor is closely tied to the concept of the five phases, the contents of such a passage only makes sense if we refer to the systems of Yin, Yang and numerology (*shushu* 數術).[6] This, then, is what we refer to as the theory of Dao after the Yellow Emperor.[7]

By investigating the function and role of the Yellow Emperor we find the rationale behind the name: Huang-Lao Daoism. It is precisely via the medium of the Yellow Emperor that the system of rules and taboos for society to abide by are introduced into the theoretical system of Huang-Lao Daoism , making its theoretical aspects practical and applicable, as well as endowing them with a natural trustworthiness and authority. Some scholars believe that the Yellow Emperor was introduced into Huang-Lao Daoism to raise the profile and influence of its theories, so that his name is, in essence, nothing more than a pseudonym and an accessory to the more essential elements.[8] In fact this is not the case, for it is via the system of rules and taboos represented by the Yellow Emperor that the process of inference from the Dao of Heaven to humankind is fully realized. To reiterate, the *Huangdi Sijing* text tells us that the Huang-Lao did not become an authoritative and applicable system of thought solely based on its aspects pertaining to the tradition of Laozi; therefore, pursuing the Yellow Emperor side of the theories is crucial, and excavated texts provide us with a wealth of resources for this purpose, allowing us to discover the rationale and certainty of these two types of theory being bound together.[9]

Theories related to politics in the *Huangdi Sijing* are also built upon two types of theories of Dao and can thus be divided into political theories after Laozi and the Yellow Emperor respectively.

According to the Dao theory after Laozi, Dao created all beings via a progression from the nameless and formless to the named and formed, with the physical and phenomenal as embodiments of Dao. In a direct parallel to this, the ruler is “one who grasps Dao”; a significant portion of his role is to recognize and grasp forms and names, to establish a system of names and roles and related rules for human society based on these forms and names, and then to simply allow this system to work laissez-faire, organizing and managing itself. In the *Huangdi Sijing*, the term “Names” (*Ming* 名) appears to hold greater significance than the term “Law” (*fa* 法 law, principals, also the character denoting the Legalist school of thought), as the principles of law can only work when the system of names has been properly established. This is the point at which Huang-Lao Daoism becomes more penetrating than the Legalist School. The “Cheng” chapter points out that when “Dao” descends to the level of “things”

(*wu*物), and the physical world begins to take form, “establishing according to forms and giving the appropriate names” is the most important task to be undertaken, as this then ensures that all beings will be differentiated, recognized and managed. This agrees with the passage of the *Laozi* (Chap. 1 in the Wang Bi 王弼 recension) that states, “Named, is the origin of the ten thousand things.” We find evidence of a similar strain of thought in the “ Daofa” subchapter of the “ Jingfa” chapter: “The Dao of that which may be seen and known is empty and vacuous. The vacuous when realized in even the finest filament, must be given a form and a name. Form and name being established, dark and light are distinguished.” Which is to say that even the smallest thing has a form and a name. Once these have been established they are as clear as “black and white”; that is to say that the characteristics, role and standards for judging that thing are established. As a result, the theory of governance in the *Huangdi Sijing* begins with the concept of names.

Because it is the function of the one who “grasps the Dao” to “see and know” the tools of the kingdom, i.e. “forms and names,” the one who “grasps the Dao” must ensure that names reliably reflect the object which they refer to, thus the ruler observes and grasps political objects, and thereby forms political strategies. In the “*Jingfa*” chapter, the founding of guiding principles for political strategy upon a theory of forms and their names is not embodied by the ruler using a fixed theory of forms and names to control his ministers, rather we see the activity of reviewing names (*shenming* 審名) as a scholarly pursuit executed with a much broader purview. Reviewing Names is a crucial act of observation that plays a decisive role in the maintenance or loss of control over the kingdom. When the kingdom and its ruler are each in their correct forms and in their proper place and state and these things are in agreement, this is known as the rectitude of names (*zheng ming*正名), otherwise they enter into a state known as biased names (*yi ming*倚名). The future of a state may be decided according to the extent to which the rectitude of names has been ensured, and which also determines whether rewards or punishments need to be applied.

The “Jingfa” chapter is full of various means of reviewing names, which form the richest part of the political theory contained therein. However, this kind of political activity can only be performed by one who “grasps the Dao.” That is to say that only such a person can realize the process by which Dao becomes named forms; this person grasps forms and names by understanding the nameless and formless, and so they themselves are not restricted to the realm of forms and names alone. This state of affairs accomplished, the ruler controls the most essential political capital which draws its authority from Dao itself, placing him in a position safe from challenge and ensuring

absolute political command. Therefore, Huang-Lao Daoist political theory, as seen in the *Huangdi Sijing* , is essentially and necessarily inseparable from theories of self-cultivation, of pursuing a state of quietude, indirect action and a pure character. Although this approach of building theories of governance upon physical and spiritual well-being is not seen frequently throughout the *Huangdi Sijing*, where present, the spirit of this approach is quite explicit.[10]

Now let us look at political theory after the Yellow Emperor . As we have discussed above, in this type of theory, responding correctly to the Dao of Heaven is the most direct and effective method of controlling the kingdom. The *Huangdi Sijing* repeatedly emphasizes that the Dao of Heaven presents a clear set of standards for human behavior (or for the Dao of humankind *rendao* 人道); one could say that human behavior should infact be an extension of the Dao of Heaven is an extension of the , in fact. In the original text there are an abundance of expressions qualified by the prefix *Tian* (天), which could be translated for the most part into English as the suffix “of Heaven,” such as: “that which is fitting of Heaven” (*Tian dang* 天當), “the epitome of Heaven” (*Tian ji*天極), “the achievement of Heaven” (*Tian gong*天功) , “the seasons (or times) of Heaven” (*Tian shi* 天時), “the destruction of Heaven” (*Tian hui* 天毀, where Heaven is the agent of destruction, as it is the agent in the following three examples), “the penitence of Heaven” (*tian zhu* 天誅), “the punishment of Heaven” (*Tian fa* 天罰), “the disaster of Heaven” (*Tian yang* 天殃), and the verb–noun pairs “to attain (that which is of) Heaven” (*de Tian* 得天), or “to lose (that of) Heaven” (*shi Tian* 失天), and so on. This imbues the inherent political theory with heavy intonations of the Dao of Heaven. However, this theory of the Dao of Heaven does not simply require humankind to bow down to the authority of Heaven with a religious piety, but to actively participate in the creation of Heaven and Earth; the most typical area of learning that embodies this concerns Yin, Yang (陰陽) and rule by Punishment or Virtue (刑德), this means that political order is required so that the kingdom may conform with the natural patterns of the interactions of Yin and Yang. As the “Guan” subchapter of the “ Shiliu Jing” chapter states, “grasp the times and cultivate the people’s achievements, administer first to virtue and then to punishment, thus following the Heavens.” Here we see that if one conforms to the Dao of Heaven, ethical education and Punishment can be organically entwined. The “ Sidu” chapter of the “ Jingfa” section, says, “Turning back when reaching its extreme, decreasing when reaching its fullest, such is the Dao of Heaven and the principles of humankind also.” Responding to the times and avoiding excesses that bring about the opposite effect are emphasized here. It was in precisely this way that political activities drew their

rationale from natural principles.

So we see from the passages discussed that the theories of Dao and governance after Laozi and the Yellow Emperor need not necessarily appear as isolated in separate texts . In terms of a guiding principle, these two systems are clearly described but yet subsume each other, each offering reflections of the other and compensating for each other's deficiencies. When taken together and in conjunction, they form the politically practical and effective theory of Huang-Lao Daoism.

3 Early Huang-Lao Thought in Bamboo Manuscripts from the Ancient State of Chu

Since the 1990s we have seen the emergence of a series of bamboo manuscripts from the State of Chu, including the Guodian hoard and those currently held at the Shanghai Museum . Of these texts , those that present with typical characteristics of Daoist thought represent no small proportion; they include the *Taiyi Shengshui* from Guodian and the *Hengxian*, *Sande* and *Fanwu Liuxing* texts held at the Shanghai Museum, to name a few. These documents contain a form of Daoism different from that which takes a critical stance towards society; these texts are instead deeply concerned with the real issues of government. In terms of the dates of completion of these manuscripts, the bamboo manuscripts dated to the mid-to-late Warring States period predate the Western Han silk manuscripts from the Mawangdui site by a good century, providing us with valuable resources for examining an earlier stage of Huang-Lao Daoism . Of course, it is a matter of logic that we cannot declare that the creation of the *Huangdi Sijing* text was necessarily later than that of the bamboo manuscripts just because the silk manuscripts were handwritten at a later date. However, although one can find evidence of the dual system of theories of Dao and governance in the bamboo manuscripts from the State of Chu, they are far less systematic, clear, and complete than those found in the *Huangdi Sijing*. In particular, the former lacks theories on politics, and call to allow the state to flourish whilst strengthening its armies; nor do we see the political philosophy that adopts ideas from the Schools of Names and Legalism whilst adhering to the essential principles of Dao. Therefore, we cannot apply our categories of theories of Dao and governance after Laozi and the Yellow Emperor , which form the basic framework of thought in the *Huangdi Sijing* directly to the Chu State bamboo manuscripts. That said, we do find that the content of the bamboo manuscripts is closely related to these two systems of theories on Dao and governance, hinting at the possibility of a process of refinement taking place that involved the two sets of texts . As we

have said, it is possible to utilize excavated texts to understand these two systems, and determine how the ideas within them gradually developed to become clear and distinct.

Firstly, we find a phenomenon within the *Sande* text that should not be ignored: that there is a startling degree of linguistic similarity between this text and the *Huangdi Sijing*. Both texts refer to the Yellow Emperor by name and as a spokesperson for the Dao of Heaven, offering guidance to humankind on matters of governance. We cannot take this to be coincidental; rather we believe that this reflects the fact that the theories of Dao and governance after the Yellow Emperor seen in the *Huangdi Sijing* may be traced back to the intellectual resources of the *Sande*. [11]

Secondly, although the three bamboo manuscripts (i.e. *Taiyi Shengshui*, *Hengxian* and *Fanwu Liuxing*) differ from the *Huangdi Sijing* text in terms of content, their theories on Dao and governance are conducted along a similar line of thought. We do not see the names of the Yellow Emperor or Laozi in these texts ; however, the logical reasoning presented here is also based on the appeal to the Dao of Heaven (primarily through descriptions of the creation of the universe) as a model for human behavior, with the ruler drawing upon Dao (in these texts represented by One *Yi* 一) to gain his political capital. This aspect is shared by the *Huangdi Sijing* and bamboo manuscripts. Therefore, from the perspective of a stage in history, and based upon seeking common ground between systems of thought, whilst observing points of difference, we find this methodology helps us to appreciate the way that Huang-Lao Daoism changed with the times. It further helps us to discover the process of interaction between the theoretical and practical aspects of Huang-Lao Daoist thought and its variety.

Amongst the Chu bamboo manuscripts we are yet to find passages similar to the “Daoyuan” chapter of the *Huangdi Sijing* that set out a framework of Dao and things, and describe a nameless and formless, independent Dao as well as an ontological structure where this Dao is the cause of the existence and processes of all things. We find that although both the *Huangdi Sijing* and bamboo manuscript texts explain human behavior by appeal to a Dao of Heaven, the Chu manuscripts more often refer to the creation of the universe for their expression, even though what we are faced with is a wide spectrum of different and even drastically varied theories of cosmogonic processes and differing views on the Dao, from which equally varied principles for human behavior can be inferred. To look at it from another point of view, perhaps this reflects some degree of variation in the practical political needs of the day, hence differing aspects of the Dao of Heaven are appealed to according to differing requirements. Although

the term “Dao” appears frequently in these theories of creation, it is not the key concept, which might be because Huang-Lao Daoism in its early stages instead favored feasible, applicable principles. Next we will look specifically at examples from *Taiyi Shengshui*, *Hengxian* and *Fanwu Liuxing*.

A unique process of universal creation is described in the *Taiyi Shengshui*, with Taiyi (太一) or the “Great One” as the source, and with a strong emphasis on water (*shui* 水). This process moves forward in interlinked stages to form an exquisite drawing of creation, which runs as follows:

Taiyi—Water—Heaven—Earth—*Shenming*—Yin and Yang —Seasons—Temperature (Cold and Hot)—Humidity (Dampness and Dryness)—The Year.

Apart from the initial stage, where Taiyi creates water, the remaining stages are all the result of mutual interaction between adjoining stages. It is worth noticing that this text does not simply present Taiyi as the initial starting point of creation: the thought process implies a recognition of an implicit relationship similar to the Dao-beings parallel; that is, by drawing a parallel between Taiyi and all beings, the entity called Taiyi and its function as the “mother of the ten thousand beings” and “path of ten thousand beings” becomes clear. What is even more worthy of attention is that having described the process of generation the author turns to a new subject, “the ruler knows this and calls it…” It is most unfortunate that at this point the bamboo slips are damaged, leaving the following content lost. However, what we can say is that clearly the following passage would have related matters of the human realm to the realm of Heaven. This thought process can also be seen in the second half of *Taiyi Shengshui*, where the author describes natural phenomena: “Heaven is lacking in the north-west,” “the Earth is lacking in the south-east”; from this, we derive the conclusion that the Dao of Heaven prizes weakness, of actively pursuing decrease of “formation” in order to replenish “creation,” or “[t]aking from the strong, to give to the weak.” This clearly is the Dao of Heaven that we are supposed to imitate. The *Taiyi Shengshui* also emphasizes that the “sage person,” if they wish to achieve “the completion of affairs and the growth of the body [or self, *shen* 身]” ought to do so in the name of Dao, “pursuing affairs through Dao.” The Dao referred to here, we believe, is not an abstract concept, but the Dao of Heaven that humankind may take directly as a model for action.[12]

If we look next at the *Hengxian*, for example the passages, “The primordial constancy is a state of nothingness, simplicity, quietness, emptiness”, and “Empty stillness or the One, as if in a lonely state of chaos, still and yet to be illuminated, yet to be created,” the

description of the original nature of Dao seen in these quotes demonstrates a similarity between the *Hengxian* and the "Daoyuan" chapter of the Mawangdui silk manuscript the *Huangdi Sijing*. However, the *Hengxian* differs in that its author does not dedicate much space to such descriptions, but focuses rather on the process of creation. The first half of the *Hengxian* concerns a cosmological theory, which may be divided into two systems. The first of these runs from nothingness to existence, from the metaphysical to the physical, a system of creation that is complete and set in abstract terms, in the following sequence: space (*huo*)—*qi*—existence—beginnings—movement. The second system specifically touches upon human society and all sorts of cultural development, and runs in the following order: generation (creation)—ideas—speech—naming—affairs. The second half of the *Hengxian* concerns political philosophy: that is, how the principles of cosmology might allow "the wise king, the wise ruler, the wise scholars" to solve "the issues of the kingdom," and manage "naming within the kingdom" (including the "works of the kingdom," "the actions of the kingdom," "creation within the kingdom"), and at the same time provide guidance on the principles of government in general.

There is an especially lucid train of thought in the *Hengxian*, that is that from the point of view of universal creation, "*qi*-energy is born of and acts of itself," hence things created from *qi*-energy, including humankind within the broad category of the "ten thousand things", are also "born of and act of themselves", and their acts are autonomous. Therefore the unknowing, aimless, non-interference, non-compulsion style of government as a means necessarily leads to subjects, the ten thousand things, including humans acting autonomously. [13]

The term "appropriate responses" (*yinxun* 因循), an important characteristic of Huang-Lao Daoist thought , is often taken to be realized on two levels: the first responds to the seasons of nature, an idea seen most frequently in the *Huangdi Sijing*, and could also be seen to be the source of theories of Punishment and Virtue (*xingde* 刑德) ; the second level responds to human nature, and is often seen throughout transmitted texts of Huang-Lao origin, such as the "Yinxun" chapter of the *Shenzi* (愼子), which says, "Greatness comes from following the Dao of Heaven, which is reduced during transformation. Responses mean responding to human emotions. All of mankind is autonomous, becoming themselves through a process of transformation … when in the wrong position, acting autonomously means the ruler will not employ you. One can make use of people's acting for themselves or for me, this is a matter of responding." The "Taizu" (泰族) chapter of the *Huainanzi* also states, "the seasons,

Heaven and Earth, do not give life to the ten thousand beings, the spirit joins them, Yin and Yang harmonize them and the ten thousand things are born. The sage person in governing the empire does not seek to alter the nature of his people, hence appropriate responses lead to greatness, transformation leads to reduction."[14] Huang-Lao Daoism seeks to establish "non-interference" governance above the rule of law, so that the dual-layered theory of appropriate reactions forms a philosophical basis that is legally wide-reaching and objective.[15] In the *Hengxian* we not only see the phrasing "autonomous" (*ziwei* 自为), but also discussion of "responses" (*yin* 因), such as, "The creation of constant qi is great because of responses. Actions are grand and non-autonomous [*bu zi ruo* 不自若]. Actions may come to pass as intended or not, neither are rejected." This passage is similar to those found in the *Shenzi* and *Huainanzi*, not only in spirit but also in literary expression. One could say that in the *Hengxian* we have located an early form of the "appropriate responses" theory.

However, a phenomenon even more worthy of our attention is that to solve the theory that mankind is self-born and autonomous, the *Hengxian* describes a theory of *qi*-energy unseen in transmitted texts , which is that *qi*-energy itself is self-born. As in the *Taiyi Shengshui*, the latter part of the *Hengxian* contains political theory and is the key part of the work, whilst the cosmological speculation in the first part is presented as a basis for the philosophy of the self-born and autonomous in the political realm. In the past, relying on transmitted texts alone, the only origin we could find for living things was a theory based on Yin-Yang and the creation of *qi*-energy. Now we can refer to the *Hengxian* and discover an alternative source of life, that of the self-born. We believe that this is a discovery of great significance; not only have we managed to discover an alternative theory of the creation of living things in the history of Chinese thought, we have also revealed that within the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition it was possible to make conscious selections regarding contemporary theories of the Dao of Heaven in order to provide evidence and argumentation for the validity of certain political principles. That is to say, in standard ontological theories the reference to *qi*-energy created from Yin-Yang is seen as sufficient; however, owing to the existence of certain political necessities, we see that the "self-born" quality of *qi*-energy can be consciously and selectively emphasized.[16]

Fanwu Liuxing is a treatise whose train of thought runs from the Dao of Heaven to the Dao of humankind, and can also be divided into two parts, with the second half describing how "the hundred beings are maintained" (*bai wu bu shi* 百物不失), and the topics of "knowing the kingdom" (*zhi tianxia* 知天下) and "governing the clans" (*zhi*

bangjia 治邦家) so as to amalgamate the kingdom to hold and govern it (*bing tianxia er zha zhi* 並天下而担之)—and so on, statements reflecting strong political ambitions. In order to fulfill these ambitions, the *Fanwu Liuxing* states the need to "grasp the One" (*zhi Yi* 執一), "attain the One" (*de Yi* 得一), "have the One (unity)" (*you Yi* 有一), "be able to unify" (*neng Yi* 能一) and "prize unity" (*gui Yi*貴一). If we recall the passage from the *Fanwu Liuxing*, "The forms of all beings flow, from whence are they created? Flowing forms become physical forms, how is it that they do not expire?", the first half of this passage is not dissimilar to Qu Yuan's (屈原) poem, " *Heavenly Questions*" (*Tian wen* 天問), which uses exaggerated literary techniques to describe nature, the realm of ghosts and deities, the human realm and the various unimaginable phenomena therein, in an attempt to discover some secret source or reason behind them. The passage continues to define the source of creation, the reason for the existence of Heaven and Earth and to speak of all living beings as the One. Unity is seen as the source of life in the universe and creator of all things, Unity in this sense clearly takes on a role similar to Dao, with comparable metaphysical characteristics. However, the *Fanwu Liuxing* seems not to argue for a concept of Unity as part of a philosophical sophistry dividing the universe along the parallel of Dao and beings. Instead, a realistic concern drives the author, as we see in the statement, "if one can grasp Unity, one loses none of the hundred things; if one cannot grasp Unity, all one hundred are lost": here we see a classic example of Huang-Lao Daoist political thought. In Huang-Lao Daoist political theory, the relationship between Unity, or the one, and the many, in the sense of a theory of universe, is of great political significance: it is the basic reasoning behind the reality of a political system where one ruler governs many subjects. As Wang Zhongjiang 王中江 puts it, "In contrast to the multitude of the ten thousand things, Unity is the life-giver and governor; which relates to society where to the 'hundred clans,' Unity is realized through the politicized sage person who acts as both governor and unifier."[17] In order to explicate how one "grasps Unity," *Fanwu Liuxing* goes into further detail and presents a theory of self-cultivation: that is, that "grasping Unity" is the sole means of understanding the true operations behind the creation and processes of the world. Only one who conquers their mind and cultivates their person can "grasp Unity," and only such a person may become the ruler and effectively rule over a kingdom. Not only in the concepts of conquering one's heart-mind or cultivating one's person, but also in the actual structure of the *Fanwu Liuxing*, or of such transmitted texts as the four chapters of the *Guanzi* ("Neiye"內業, " Xinshu Shang" 心術上, "Xinshu Xia" 心術下, "Bai Xin"白心) there is an undeniable similarity there. The four chapters of the *Guanzi* are commonly

accepted as an example of Huang-Lao Daoist writing in a transmitted text, and focus a significant amount of discussion on physical cultivation leading to good governance. The emergence of the *Fanwu Liuxing* text provided us with a valuable resource for exploring the transmission of thought contained in the four chapters of the *Guanzi*, its influence, and theories of cultivation in the early stage of Huang-Lao Daoist thought.

From the above discussion we find that the three bamboo manuscripts of the ancient State of Chu all contain the common element of exploring the Dao of humankind through discussions of the Dao of Heaven. However, they do so by reference to three differing theories of Dao, resulting in differing principles on the affairs of humanity, which we assume would have suited different social requirements at different levels of government. Their theories of Dao are all more or less related to those contained in the *Laozi*: for example, the *Taiyi Shengshui* text was copied along with the Laozi C fragments on the same set of bamboo slips retrieved from the Guodian site, from which we might infer that the *Taiyi Shengshui* text was a part of the version of the *Laozi* recovered from Guodian. The sage person of the *Hengxian* text acts according to the principles of non-action, with an autonomous populace; the description of this is reminiscent of the idea of non-action leading to self-action in the *Laozi*. *Fanwu Liuxing* identifies Unity as the basis for all existence and action, in which it seems to be influenced by Chap. 39 (Wang Bi recension) of the *Laozi*: “Of old, these came to be in possession of the One: Heaven in virtue of the One is limpid; Earth in virtue of the One is settled; gods in virtue of the One have their potencies; the valley in virtue of the One is full; the myriad creatures in virtue of the One are alive; lords and princes in virtue of the One become leaders of the empire.” However, we must not rush to categorize such extracts as evidence of a theory of governance after Laozi, because even though there is sporadic mention of Dao in these texts , it is yet to become a metaphysical concept or a key concept in them.[18] On the contrary, the key concepts are: *Taiyi*, *Hengxian* and *Yi*, all of which refer to a universal ontology with the stylings of a Dao of Heaven. From a directly attainable Dao of Heaven upon which we can model our actions, specific and feasible political concepts and systems are drawn; there are characteristics of theories of Dao and governance after the Yellow Emperor, more practical than the concept of Dao, and focused on its functions. The three main texts under discussion (*Taiyi Shengshui*, *Huangdi Sijing* and *Fanwu Liuxing*) make no mention of the Yellow Emperor by name. The Yellow Emperor is mentioned in the *Sande*, but mostly in the form of quotes and cautions attributed to him, and we see no systematic expressions of a theory of Yin-Yang or

Punishment and Virtue. This proves that terms such as theories of Dao and governance after Laozi and the Yellow Emperor respectively, which have been derived from the mature framework of the Mawangdui silk manuscript *Huangdi Sijing*, cannot be mechanically applied to the Chu State manuscripts. At the same time, we find that these Chu State texts are definitely related to the two types of theories of Dao and governance, and we also find common ground in its thought processes, implying the potential for continued development from one set of texts to the next. We can catch glimpses of theories of Dao and governance modeled after Laozi and the Yellow Emperor respectively amongst the descriptions of universal creation and political philosophy; it is as if they are about to break the surface. If we call the *Huangdi Sijing* the mature state of Huang-Lao Daoist thought, then we may be able to find traces of its earlier development in the Chu State texts.

The number of Chu State manuscripts that has emerged allows us to conduct comparisons with the silk manuscripts from Mawangdui and with transmitted texts, in order to observe whether or not there are common issues addressed in Huang-Lao Daoist writings. By similar issues or styles we mean similar patterns in the areas of structures of thought processes and their forms of literary expression. With the process of inference from the Dao of Heaven to the Dao of humankind as a set standard, we find a two-part structure common amongst Huang-Lao Daoist texts, with the first part addressing the respective theories of Dao and the second part focused on political theorizing, to form a neat contrast. The *Taiyi Shengshui* and *Hengxian* are typical examples of this literary structure.[19] The "Daoyuan" chapter of the *Huangdi Sijing* also follows this pattern. This type of text is usually short in length, simple, lucid and accessible, presenting neat cause-and-effect relationships, so that a certain cause leads necessarily to a certain effect; in the same way, a certain theory of Dao leads to a certain way of thinking about governance. Although they do not lack theoretical foundations, these types of text tend to steer clear of overly mystical sophistry; any profound theorizing is firmly aimed at resolving the political issues of the day, and tends towards the integration of theory and practice, coloring them with a style that is politically utilitarian. As a result, their applicability, efficacy and their feasibility are their most obvious characteristics. These texts often utilize a special kind of expression to deliver the short concise ideas that they have in common. Firstly, they are predominantly written in rhyme: the *Sande*, *Fanwu Liuxing* and the "Cheng" chapter of the *Huangdi Sijing* are examples of this. Literary creation in rhyming verse suggests that these were not texts designed to be studied by individual scholars or literati, or even to be explored by individual schools of

thought , but were composed so as to be easy to recite, accessible to all from the ruler to the common man, with the principles ready to put into practice from first contact. Secondly, Huang-Lao writings, especially those attributed as the “words of the Yellow Emperor,” are often characterized by their style of introducing taboos. The “ Sidu” and the “Cheng” chapter of the *Huangdi Sijing* are examples of this characteristic, often using combinations prefixed by the character for Heaven (天 X) when describing the rewards or punishments originating from a deity-type entity or from nature. The descriptions of ideal and non-ideal behavior are often couched in the terms “it is beneficial to do…” (*li* 利), “it is permissible to…” (*keyi* 可以), or conversely the imperative “do not…” (*wu* 勿) or “it is not permissible to…” (*bu keyi* 不可以). These texts often frames sentences with the phrase “it is said that” (*shi wei* 是謂) (or alternatively, “thus it is said” *ci wei* 此謂, “it is called” *ming yue* 名曰, “it is commanded” *ming yue* 命曰, “call it so” *wei zhi* 謂之), and categorized by sets of numbers. In terms of vocabulary, single characters or compound words reflecting particular outcomes are popular, for example: auspicious, fortune, strength, victory, advancement, ease, flourishing, achievement, growth, long-lasting, still, settled, no trouble[20]; this includes a proportion in a tone of voice reminiscent of foretelling misfortune: inauspicious, misfortune, reduction, weakness, failure, retreat, counter-flow, danger, abnormal, disorder, killing, war, penitentiary battle, elimination, disaster, complaints, illness, death, loss, breakage, destruction, disrepair and damage.[21] With their plain and concise linguistic style, clear, to the point and avoiding lengthy and wordy explanations, the texts convey a sense of authority and confidence.[22]

4 Conclusions

Usually it is believed that the Huang-Lao Daoist tradition is a miscellaneous mix which adopts ideas from all its contemporary schools of thought without any discernable basic framework. However, if we take the Mawangdui silk manuscript *Huangdi Sijing* as a representative text of the tradition, as we have discussed above, within the one text we can clearly discern theories of Dao and governance after Laozi and the Yellow Emperor respectively, as two major trains of thought that are mutually indicative, and which complete each other. Although this framework cannot be mechanically applied to the Chu State documents, this group of texts do not as yet offer us an impression of the framework in its formative stages. At the same time, the high degree of similarity of thought processes and literary expressions between both sets of texts reflects the reality that Huang-Lao Daoism has certain set characteristics. This is not in conflict with the idea that Huang-Lao Daoism lacks its own

unique characteristics as a school of thought. Observing the Chu State texts, the process of inference from Dao of Heaven to the Dao of humankind, from well-being to good governance, are clear but not specific to any one school of thought. For example, the presence of an idea of the Rites of Heaven (*Tianli* 天禮), described in the *Sande* text and a system of taboos, is similar to passages in the *Shang Shu* , *Li Ji* and *Dadai Liji*. This is what has sparked debate over whether the *Sande* belongs to the Ruist or Huang-Lao tradition. This reminds us that Huang-Lao is a combination of various schools. This may have been a subconscious and automatic adoption of ideas, which is different from the approach described during the early Han where Huang-Lao Daoism takes Daoist thought as its mainstay and actively, consciously adopting from different schools based on real-world political requirements. With a tendency to refer to varying theories of the universe and the Dao of Heaven and inferring political theories from these, we look back now and call such a text an early precursor to Huang-Lao Daoism. In the Warring States period there was not necessarily a clear conscious decision to take one school of thought as mainstay. This is precisely why we suggest that Huang-Lao Daoism should be categorized according to the similarity and cohesiveness of its content, rather than an academic assessment of lineage. In future research, we should make increasing use of excavated texts and dedicate our work to observing how Huang-Lao Daoism progressed from an indistinct to a mature form.

Footnotes

1

See Meng Wentong 蒙文通, "A Brief Outline of the Huang-Lao Studies ," in his *Zhuzi Philosophy in Pre-Qin Days and Rationalism.* Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2006, pp. 191–223.

2

Guo Moruo 郭沫若, "A Critique of the Huang-Lao Daoist School of the Jixia Academy," in *Ten Critiques* . Beijing: Orient Publishing Press, 1996, pp. 142–173.

3

The *Huangdi Sijing* 黃帝四經, previously entitled *Lost Ancient Text Preceding the Laozi B of the Mawangdui Silk Manuscripts*, is made up of four chapters, the *Jingfa*經法, *Shiliu Jing*十六經, *Cheng* 稱 and *Daoyuan* 道. Some scholars refer to these texts as the *Huang-Lao Silk Manuscripts*, following Tang Lan 唐蘭 who suggests that they are the *Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor* named in the *Hanshu Yiwenzi*. Although there is some debate, this is generally accepted as a valid identification.

4

There are varied opinions on the dating of this text : see Zhang Zengtian 張增田, "*A Review of Research into the Huang-Lao Silk Manuscripts*." *Journal of Anhui University* 4 (2001), which states that although some parts of the text can be traced back to the Spring and Autumn period, its overall style is undoubtedly closer to the mid-to-late Warring States period, therefore the date of completion of the text ought to be closer to the end of the Qin and beginning of the Han dynasty.

5

For further discussion on the image and roles of the Yellow Emperor in transmitted texts , see Qian Mu 錢穆, *The Yellow Emperor.* Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2004; Chen Ligui , 陳麗桂, *Huang-Lao Thought in the Warring States Period.* Taipei: Linking Publishing, 1991, particularly the first chapter; and Jin Chenghuan 金晟煥, *Origins of Huang-Lao Daoism* . Beijing: Social Sciences in China Press , 2008.

6

Regarding the relationship between The Yellow Emperor and the five phases, see Liu Bin 劉彬, *A Study of the Silk Manuscript of the Yao Chapter of the Changes.* Jinan: Studies of Zhouyi, 2007; Ge Zhiyi's 葛志毅 two papers, "The Yellow Emperor and Related Studies," and "A Study into the Silk Manuscripts of the Yellow Emperor and Laozi and Related Studies," in his *The System and Culture of Pre-Qin and Han Dynasties.* Harbin: Heilongjiang Education Press, 1998: these combine an investigation of the *Huangdi Sijing* with detailed research into the School of Yin-Yang characteristics of the so-called "lost words of the Yellow Emperor" (*Huangdi yi yan* 黃帝遺言).

7

Discussion of the Dao of Heaven is not entirely absent from the *Laozi*, nor are the passages attributed to the Yellow Emperor entirely free of mention of the parallel drawn between Dao and things. However, here we make the distinction based upon their relative emphases.

8

For example Ding Yuanming 丁原明, *Overview of the Huang-Lao School*. Jinan: Shandong University Press, 1997 , claims that most of the texts that are related to the Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi*) are in fact using the term as a pretext, and "Yellow Emperor studies" are not based on any particular theoretical system—meaning that the characteristic content of Huang-Lao learning is not "Huang" but "Lao". See pp. 21–25.

9

Zhang Zengtian 張增田 points out in "The Huang-Lao Silk Texts" 黃老帛書, "'Dao' is merely an important justification for the silk manuscripts' Dao of governance and the theory of governance is likewise established according to the Dao of Heaven. Thus, there are two justifications for the Dao of governance in the silk manuscripts. Even though 'Dao' in the silk manuscripts and all Daoist doctrine is the highest category, and thus plays a role

in the silk manuscripts as the most important justification for governance, yet the author of the text tends to emphasize 'the Dao of Heaven' over the unqualified entity of Dao." At the same time, he identifies a deficiency in contemporary research, saying, "Yet when analyzing the theory of Dao in silk manuscripts, most scholars consciously or unconsciously take 'the Dao of Heaven' as another name for 'Dao', and use the function of 'the Dao of Heaven' to confirm the fundamental action of Dao upon the Dao of humankind and its basic paradigm, properties and status. This kind of methodology inevitably lacks rigor." See Zhang Zengtian 張增田, *The Huang-Lao Dao of Governance and its Application.* Guangzhou: Zhongshan University Press, 2005, pp. 41–42. This is very close to the position we take here; we further categorize these as "a theory of Dao after Laozi" and "a theory of Dao after the Yellow Emperor ," and discuss these two types of theory of Dao alongside two types of theory of governance.

10

For more detailed discussion by the author regarding the terms Dao, Names and Law, see also Cao Feng 曹峰, *Categories of Ming in the Huangdi Sijing*. Changsha: Journal of Hunan University Social Sciences , 2007 and Cao Feng 曹峰, *The Relationship between 'He Who Grasps the Dao' and Ming in Huangdi Sijing*. Changsha: Journal of Hunan University Social Sciences, 2008. See also Chap. 6 of this book.

11

For more detail see articles by Cao Feng 曹峰, *Huang Hou as Huang Di in the Sande.* Qufu: Qilu Journal, 2008; Cao Feng 曹峰, *A Comparative Study of the Sande and Huangdi Sijing*. Wuhan: Jianghan Tribune, 2006. See also Chap. 5 of this book.

12

On the relationship between the Dao of Heaven and Huang-Lao Daoism, see Cao Feng , "Annotation of 'the Dao of Heaven Prizes Weakness' Chapter of the *TYSS*, and its Relationship to the Guodian *Laozi*," from the Proceedings of the International Conference on Excavated Texts and Ancient Culture, Qinghua University, June 2013 (*Taiyi sheng shui Tiandao gui ruo pian xin quan— jianlun yu Guodian Laozi de guanxi* 太一生水"天道貴弱"篇新詮—兼論與郭店楚簡老子的關係 *chutu wenxian yu zhongguo gudai wenming guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* 出土文獻與中國古代文明國際學術研討會論文集 *Qinghua daxue* 清華大學) Beijing: Journal of Tsinghua University, 2015.

13

For more details, see Cao Feng , "From Self-Born to Autonomy—An Exploration of Political Philosophy in the *Hengxian*," *Gujin Lunheng* 14 (May 2006) (*cong zisheng dao ziwei—Hengxian zhengzhi zhexue Tanxi* 從"自生"到"自為"—恒先政治哲學探析, 臺灣中央研究院歷史語言研究所編 *Gujin lunheng* 古今論衡第十四期). See also Chap. 4 of this volume.

14

Following the suggestion of Wang Niansun 王念孫, we read the graph *zuo* 作 as *hua* 化. For more see Wang Niansun, *Reading Notes* ((*Dushu Zazhi*)《讀書雜誌》). Nanjing:

Jiangsu Ancient Books Publishing House 南京:江蘇古籍出版, 2000, p. 949.

15

On the question of the relationship of commonality and objectivity between the theory of appropriate responses and rule of law in Huang-Lao Daoism, see Wang Zhongjiang 王中江, *Principle of Law Philosophy, Publicity and Ideal of Law's Community in Huang-Lao School—Why is Ruling of Dao and Law*, in *International Conference on Excavated Texts and Ancient Culture*. Beijing: Peking University Press, 2011 (*Huanglao de Fazhexue yuanli gongongxing he falü gongtongti lixiang* 黃老學的法哲學原理公共性和法律共同體理想 *jianbo wenming yu gudai sixiang shijie* 簡帛文明與古代思想世界 *Beijing daxue chubanshe* 北京大學出版社).

16

For further details see Cao Feng 曹峰, *A Theory of Qi-Energy in the Hengxian—A New Source of Creation for All Things.* Beijing: The Synopsis of Philosophical Researches, 2012 vol. 5 (*Hengxian de qilun—yi zhong xin de wanwu shengcheng dongli moshi* 恒先的氣論—一種新的萬物生成動力模式 *Zhexue Yanjiu* 哲學研究).

17

See also Wang Zhongjiang , "The Structure of Thought surrounding Yi and its Position in *Fanwu Liuxing*," in *International Conference on Excavated Texts and Ancient Culture,* Beijing: Peking University Press, 2011, p. 82 (*Fanwu liuxing Yi de sixiang gouzao ji qi weizhi* 凡物流形"一"的思想構造及其位置 *jianbo wenming yu gudai sixiang* 簡帛文明與古代思想世界).

18

As for why we do not find the word "Dao" in these texts , Wang Zhongjiang believes that this is due to intentional avoidance of the metaphysically loaded term "Dao," and thus a more vivid and intuitive name is used to express the origin of the universe. He discusses this question in his papers "The Creation of the Cosmos and Humanity in the *Hengxian*" (*Heng Xian de yuzhouguan ji renjian de gouzao* 恆先的宇宙觀及人間觀的構造) and "The Creation and Position of the Idea of '*Yi*' in *Fanwu Liuxing*" (*Fan Wu Liu Xing yi de sixiang gouzao jiqi weizhi* 凡物流行"一"的思想構造及其位置 *Jianbo wenming yu gudai sixiang shijie* 簡帛文明與古代思想世界, ibid., p. 58, 80). Shinichi Yanaka (谷中信一) believes that the fully structured and metaphysically loaded "Dao" seen in the modern *Laozi* does not appear in Chu bamboo texts; see Shinichi Yanaka 谷中信一, "An Analysis of the Idea of Cosmos in the Hengxian," in Ding Sixin丁四新 ed., *Research of Chu Bamboo Silk Thoughts*, vol. III, Wuhan: Hubei Education Press, 2007 (*Heng Xian yuzhoulun xiyi* 恆先宇宙觀析義 in Ding Sixin丁四新 ed. *Chudi jianbo sixiang yanjiu san* 楚地簡帛思想研究(三) (*Wuhan Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe* 湖北教育出版社).

19

Whereas the *Fanwu Liuxing* is the opposite way round, first discussing phenomena and then the principles behind them.

20

吉, 福, 強, 勝, 進, 順, 昌, 成, 長, 久, 靜, 定, 無事.

21

凶, 禍, 削, 弱, 敗, 退, 逆, 災, 異, 亂, 殺, 戮, 誅, 滅, 殃, 怨, 病, 死, 亡, 喪, 破, 毀, 壞, 損.

22

Regarding Huang-Lao Daoism's literary style, see Cao Feng 曹峰, "Huang-Lao Thought and Numerology in the Folk Tradition—Following the Leads of Excavated Texts." *Zhuzi Journal* 5 (2011) (*Huang-Lao sixiang yu minjian shushu—yi chutu wenxian wei xiansuo*黃老思想與民間數術-以出土文獻為線索*Zhuzi xuekan* 諸子學刊 issue 5 *Shanghai guji chubanshe* 上海古籍出版社).

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3. Huang-Lao Thought and Folk Techniques and Calculations: Using Clues from Excavated Texts

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1 A Look Back at Previous Studies

The rise and fall of studies of Huang-Lao thought is closely linked to the discovery of texts . Before excavated texts such as the Mawangdui Han tomb silk manuscript *Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi Sijing*)[1] were discovered, even though we had well-known works such as Guo Moruo's *Critique of the Jixia Huang-Lao School* (*Jixia Huang-Lao xuepai de pipan*)[2] and Meng Wentong's *A Brief Discussion of the Huang-Lao School* (*Lüelun Huang-Lao xue*),[3] which laid out the basic system of Huang-Lao thought, they were limited by the materials available and they only arranged and analyzed content from received texts related to Huang-Lao. There was much discussion of the relationship between Daoism and the Lao school, and little study of the Yellow Emperor. This situation changed greatly after the Mawangdui Han tomb silk manuscripts were excavated, as new texts such as the *Huangdi Sijing* contained a lot of content that was not found in received texts . Although there were common philosophical tendencies in the new texts and in the Huang-Lao information found in received texts, there were major differences in the levels of focus, concepts used and methods of argument, and many of these differences were closely related to the "Yellow Emperor ." With the sudden emergence of new materials such as the *Huangdi Sijing*, the Huang-Lao school quickly

became well known, and many papers and general surveys of the subject appeared.[4] Most scholars acknowledged that Daoist thought as represented by Laozi and the arguments and theories attributed to the "Yellow Emperor" were the two main sources of Huang-Lao thought; they only disagreed on whether the "Huang school" or the "Lao school" was more important and more dominant. Of course, some scholars disagree as to whether there is something that can be called the "Huang school."[5] I believe that it is inappropriate to use the term "Huang school," but for the purpose of research, I must temporarily find a name for the extremely heterogeneous and rich layer of thought in Huang-Lao philosophy that differs from the "Lao school." For the time being, I will use the term "words of the Yellow Emperor" to explore the ideas in Huang-Lao thought that are different from the "Lao school" and uniquely represent the Yellow Emperor .

However, with its two main intellectual sources in "the words of the Yellow Emperor" and Laozi, Huang-Lao studies today still mainly focus on the status and influence (as well as occurrence and development) of Daoist thought as represented by Laozi in the Huang-Lao school. They also emphasize the effect of the Huang-Lao school on political thought during the Warring States , Qin and Han periods, and they reconfirm the value of Huang-Lao-related texts among received texts.

Regarding "the words of the Yellow Emperor," they mainly emphasize an analysis of the philosophical principles behind them, but seldom look at the origins of this philosophy and its relationship[6] with folk conceptual systems such as techniques and calculations (*shushu*; 術數).[7] This research method is actually a natural extension of the research scope of Guo Moruo and Meng Wentong. This pattern developed first, because traditional ways of thinking still have a certain degree of influence and previous research frameworks had left a certain space for exploration in this area. The second reason was that a lack of texts to compare with the relevant parts of "the words of the Yellow Emperor" meant that interpreting them was difficult, and this prevented further progress in research. For example, in the *Huangdi Sijing*, most research before now has focused on the more easily interpreted texts "The Canon: Law" ("Jingfa") and "Dao the Origin" ("Daoyuan"), while research on the "Sixteen Canons" ("Shiliu Jing") and "Designations" ("Cheng") has lagged far behind. The third reason is that new supplemental materials are lacking. Therefore, after a momentary rise in studies of Huang-Lao thought, they then actually started to decline and did not receive much attention from scholars.

Now, with the appearance of new texts such as *Primordial Constancy* (*Hengxian*) and *Three Virtues* (*Sande*) in the Shanghai Museum bamboo slips, new possibilities have emerged for the

development of research into the Huang-Lao school. In particular, my evidential scholarship has shown that in *Sande*, "empress" is "emperor,"[8] and much of the *Sande* content corresponds to content in the *Huangdi Sijing* (excluding "Daoyuan").[9] Looking at the formation of thought, the *Sande* may have been created earlier than the *Huangdi Sijing*; indeed, the *Sande* may have been one of the sources of *Huangdi Sijing* (excluding "Daoyuan") thought. Both the "Hengxian" and the "Daoyuan" from the *Huangdi Sijing* have an extremely similar thought structure in that they both seek to illuminate the ways of man through the Heavenly Way and have mutually corresponding cosmogonies and political philosophies. Not only can adequate use of these new materials further studies of Daoism and the Lao school; it can also provide materials for interpreting "the words of the Yellow Emperor."

Because of the diversity, immensity, inclusiveness, and complexity of Huang-Lao thought, it is hard for us to formulate a suitable definition of it. We can grasp some basic characteristics of the system, however, and then from this point, start to grasp some of its intellectual characteristics. It is guided by Daoist thought, and of course its major characteristic is that it fuses the Hundred Schools of thought , but the Huang-Lao school places more emphasis on the workings of the Dao and does not resemble the Lao-Zhuang Daoists in their enthusiasm for discussing ontology. The Huang-Lao school is 100% a political philosophy of its own time; it does not make profound arguments and penetrating theoretical expositions that transcend time. Instead, it focuses on resolving the political issues at hand. It does not employ indirect, winding reasoning, but rather directly and resolutely expresses approval and denial. It was not a theoretical exploration of a certain school or a class of intellectuals, but rather was easily understood by all, from the rulers on down to the ordinary people, and it gave guiding principles for action that could be followed. Therefore, its pragmatic features, and more specifically, its applicability, effectiveness (from a certain perspective, its timely and speedy effectiveness) and operability are its greatest features.

To strengthen this characteristic, the Huang-Lao school emphasized taboos in its content and language. Its use of the Heavenly Way, Monthly Orders, Yin and Yang , and the five phases is meant not only to serve as practical knowledge and techniques in real political life, but also to obtain wide obedience from the people, and the general authority and influence gained from the possession of such knowledge and techniques. The "words of the Yellow Emperor" were actually meant for the same purpose, because among the people, the "Yellow Emperor " was the inventor and main representative of a

great deal of information of this kind. We refer to this knowledge and these techniques and their relevant taboos as “folk techniques and calculations.” This chapter mainly takes clues from excavated texts combined with received texts in an attempt to explore the impact of folk techniques and calculations on Huang-Lao thought from the perspective of (1) techniques and calculations characteristics of the Yellow Emperor’s image; (2) the relationships between the concepts of “ forms and names” (*xing ming*), “forms/punishment and virtue/ bounty” (*xing de*), and techniques and calculations; and (3) the linguistic characteristics of techniques and calculations.

2 Techniques and Calculations in Textual Images of the Yellow Emperor

Many previous studies have investigated the references to the Yellow Emperor found in received texts.[10] Yang Rubin divides scholars’ interpretations of the Yellow Emperor into four categories: (1) heavenly deity, (2) earthly deity, (3) the first ancestor and (4) cultural hero.[11] Zhong Zongxian divides the image of the Yellow Emperor in received texts into three categories: (1) the virtuous first ancestor who founded the state, (2) the emperor who cultivated the Way and sought immortality and (3) the ancestor who created culture.[12] These categorizations basically reflect the overall appearance of the Yellow Emperor found in received texts.

- If we look at his image from the perspective of religion and culture, the Yellow Emperor first appeared as both divine and human, and as one who could therefore monopolize the channel to God (the Heavenly Emperor, *shangdi*上帝). For example, in the *Discourses of the States*, the “First Discourses of Lu” chapter (*Guoyu:* “Luyu Shang”) says, “The Yellow Emperor was able to complete the decrees of all things to illuminate the people in sharing riches.” The *Book of Rites*’ “Law of Sacrifices” chapter (*Liji:* “Jifa”) has similar content, with “complete decrees” (*cheng ming*成命) changed to “correct names” (*zheng ming*正名). The *Elder Dai’s Book of Rites*’ “ Virtue of the Five Emperors” chapter (*Dadai Liji:* “Wudi De”) and the “Annals of the Five Emperors” in the *Records of the Grand Scribe* (*Shiji:* “Wudi benji”) both state, “The Yellow Emperor … was born with supernatural intellect and could speak in infancy.” After recounting the Yellow Emperor’s achievements, the “Calendars” chapter of the *Records of the Grand Scribe* (*Shiji*: “Lishiu”) says: “Because of this, the people could have trust, and the spirits could have brilliant virtue. People and spirits had their own duties, and they were

reverent and not profane. Therefore, the spirits gave the people good harvest, and the people offered goods to them. Disaster would not come, and they had no lack of what they asked for." The Yellow Emperor then created Heaven and Earth and distinguished between Yin and Yang. "Annals of the Five Emperors" in *Records of the Grand Scribe* says that the Yellow Emperor: "followed the rules of Heaven and Earth and signs of the dark and light." Correct meaning (Zhengyi正義) interprets "signs of the dark and light" as "referring to the Yin and Yang and Five Phases, which the Yellow Emperor knew of through divination and calculation." In the *Huainanzi*, "Activating the Genuine" ("Chuzhen") says: "Coming to the age of the Divine Farmer and the Yellow Emperor, they split and sundered the Great Ancestor, examining and directing Heaven and Earth. … They held on to Yin and Yang , and harmonized the hard and the soft." The *Huainanzi*'s chapter "A Forest of Persuasions" (" Shuolin") also says, "The Yellow Emperor produced Yin and Yang." In the *Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor*, the section "Basic Questions: Great Treatise on the Response and Appearance of Yin and Yang" (*Huangdi Neijing*: "Suwen: Yinyang Yingxiang Dalun") says, "The Yellow Emperor said, Yin and Yang are the Dao of Heaven and Earth, the guides for all things, the mother and father of change, the origin and beginning of life and death, the home of the spiritual." Also, residing in the center of the Five Phases is the ideal character for rulers. In *Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals*, the "Almanac for the Third Month of Summer" (*Lüshi Chunqiu*: "Jixia Ji") states, "The central region occupied by Earth. … Its emperor is the Yellow Emperor; its spirit is Houtu." In the *Huainanzi*, "Heaven's Patterns" chapter (" Tianwen") we find: "The Center is Earth. Its emperor is the Yellow Emperor; his helper is Houtu. He grasps the marking cord and governs the four quarters." The Mawangdui Han tomb silk manuscript *Divination of the Five Planets* (*Wuxing Zhan*) also says: "Earth is in the center. Its emperor is the Yellow Emperor ; his assistant is Houtu." *Records of the Grand Scribe: Astronomy* (*Shiji: Tianguan shu*) says: "Earth is in the center, it governs the last month of summer, its calendar follows Wu and Ji. The Yellow Emperor governs virtue."

Chen Ligui points out:

In texts from the pre-Qin and Han periods, the arrangements of the emperors of the five directions, starting from Tan Zi's discussion of the names of the ancient emperors in *Zuo's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Zuozhuan*) to the

Classic of Mountain and Seas (*Shanhaijing*) , *Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals:* "Almanac for the Third Month of Summer", *Huainanzi* ("Heaven's Patterns," "Seasonal Rules" [" Shize"]), and even the *Book of Odes:* "Engulfing Divine Mist" (*Shi*: "Hanshenwu") and *Book of Documents:* (*Shu*: "Dimingyan"), all take the Yellow Emperor as the emperor (head deity) of the center, with Earth virtue/power residing in the center. All of the other emperors each rule one season or govern one direction; only the Yellow Emperor "regulates the four directions."[13]

Third, the Yellow Emperor was the creator of some of humankind's most important systems, orders and civilizations. Qian Mu sums this up as:

> The Yellow Emperor … knew of the Heavenly patterns above, deduced the movements of the sun, moon, planets, and constellations, and knew in advance the changes in the four seasons. In the middle, he knew of the affairs of man, differentiated men from women, and distinguished male from female beasts. He created tools and built houses. He raised the birds and beasts, and tamed those that were wild. Below, he knew the conditions of the land, planted the many grains, and grew the plants and trees. He used earth, stone, gold, and jade.[14]

Sima Qian said, "In the past, the Yellow Emperor learned from the example of Heaven and Earth, the Four Sages followed nature, and each created laws" (*Records of the Grand Scribe: "Autobiographical Afterword of the Grand Scribe"* [*Shiji*: "Taishigong Zixu"]) . *New Writings:* " Words on Ruling I" (*Xinshu*: "Xiuzheng Yu Shang") says: "The Yellow Emperor governed the Dao and appropriateness, gave principle to Heaven and Earth, gave discipline to human relations, and gave order to all things. He gave primacy to trustworthiness and humaneness throughout the world." In the *Book of Han:* "Record of Art and Literature" (*Hanshu*: "Yiwenzhi") , apart from five Daoist works being attributed to the Yellow Emperor , many other books were falsely attributed to him. Due to a lack of space, I will not list them all here, but there were 12 categories and 26 subcategories that touched on the Yin-Yang school, the Xiaoshuo school, Military Yin-Yang , astronomy, calendars, the five phases, assorted divination, medical studies,[15] medical prescriptions, sexual techniques and deities and immortals. Furthermore, there are works attributed to the Yellow Emperor's subjects that are related to sexual techniques, Daoism, the Yin-Yang school , and military Yin-Yang. The image of the Yellow Emperor seen in *Generational Records* (*Shiben*) and *Seven Tallies from the Cloud Box*: "Annals of Xuan Yuan" (*Yunji Qi Qian*: "Xuan Yuan

Benji") is basically the same. The content of these works reflects the same trends; that is, most of it presents practical knowledge and techniques that transcend schools and states, which can be put to use effectively in daily life.

To speak more frankly, the Yellow Emperor is an almost omnipotent grand shaman, and the development of traditional Chinese techniques and calculations is almost entirely attributable to him; he was also an advocate of using techniques and calculations to govern all things under Heaven. There are innumerable such examples; I will provide only three here. *Records of the Grand Scribe*: "Annals of the Five Emperors " says that he "deduced the calendar … followed the rules of Heaven and Earth, signs of the dark and light, rites of death and life, and the patterns of existence and loss. He sowed seeds of the hundred grains, grasses, and trees according to the seasons, tamed the birds, beasts, and insects, and extended to the sun, moon, stars, and earth, stone, gold, and jade." In *Records of the Grand Scribe*: "Calendars" says:

> The Grand Historian said: "The affairs before Shennong's time are too far off. Starting with the Yellow Emperor, celestial phenomena were investigated, the calendar was established, the five phases were established, the principle of increases and decreases was discovered, and intercalary months were created. Then the spirits of Heaven and Earth and all types of officials were established, called the five officials. Each had its own rules for governing, and they did not interfere with one another. Because of this, the people could have trust, and the spirits could have brilliant virtue. People and spirits had their own duties, and they were reverent and not profane. Therefore, the spirits gave the people good harvest, and the people offered goods to them. Disaster would not come, and they had no lack of what they asked for."

According to *Huainanzi*: " Surveying Obscurities" ("Lanming"):

In ancient times, the Yellow Emperor ruled the world. Li Mu and Taishan Ji assisted him in regulating the movements of the sun and moon, setting in order the *qi* of Yin and Yang , delimiting the measure of the four seasons, correcting the calculations of the pitch pipes and the calendar. They separated men from women, differentiated female and male [animals], clarified the high and the low, ranked the worthy and the mean.

Here, we are not concerned with whether the Yellow Emperor really invented so many things, and we will not discuss how his image changed over time. We will only look at the social functions of his image. Actually, through folk techniques and calculations, the Yellow

Emperor impacted nearly every aspect of daily life. When I say "folk techniques and calculations," I am referring not only to techniques and calculations from the lower levels of society, but to daily life practices at all levels of society. They range from issues of individual dress, food, housing, behavior, birth, old age, illness and death up to creation of the state, sacrifices and wars, all of which had rule and taboo systems that were widely believed and followed throughout society. I believe these systems can be called folk techniques and calculations. One important aspect of the Huang-Lao school is that it incorporated these widely followed rule and taboo systems into its theory and gave them both practical operability and a natural reliability and authority. Since these rule and taboo systems of the Yellow Emperor were in fixed positions, "the words of the Yellow Emperor" naturally became synonymous with them.

All three levels of the image of the Yellow Emperor mentioned above are found in excavated texts. In "Shiliu Jing" in the *Huangdi Sijing* and the Shanghai Museum bamboo slip *Sande*, the Heavenly Emperor (Shangdi) and Yellow Emperor appear simultaneously, with the Yellow Emperor located between the Heavenly Emperor and ordinary people, monopolizing the channel to the Heavenly Emperor and ruling and issuing orders on his behalf. The Heavenly Emperor does not speak—he only expresses happiness, anger, reward or punishment through good and bad natural phenomena.[16] In folk belief, the Yellow Emperor or Heavenly Emperor clearly has religious significance and possesses absolute authority. His words were not argumentative or instructive, but rather expressed an immovable will. In "Shiliu Jing" and *Sande,* we find many expressions such as "do not …," with an extremely broad range of content. Some even correspond to the Confucian notion of "ritual," and by comparison with *Sande*, we see that even though the name of the Yellow Emperor does not appear in "Cheng" in the *Huangdi Sijing*, "do not …" and similar expressions spoken in the voice of the empress (but actually the Yellow Emperor) appear in *Sande,* and these lines can also be found in "Cheng." Therefore, even though the Yellow Emperor does not appear in "Cheng," [this work] still has a relation to the "words of the Yellow Emperor."[17] These warnings and admonitions were like divinations and taboos—they were external precepts that ordinary people had to follow, and were not for internal self-reflection.

"Establishing the Mandate" ("Liming") in "Shiliu Jing" says of the Yellow Emperor: "He made himself into an exemplary image and faced the four directions to supplement his single heart-mind. Reaching out from the center to all directions, he consulted what was to his left, he consulted what was to his right. He acted on his position and carried out his consultations, and, for this reason, he was able to

be the ancestral model for the world." This corresponds to *Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals*: " Fundamental Tastes" (*Lüshi Chunqiu*: "Benwei"), "Thus, the Yellow Emperor sought worthies in the four directions," and to *Shizi* , in which we find: "Zigong asked Confucius : 'Formerly the Yellow Emperor faced the four directions. Was this trustworthiness?'" (see *Imperial Readings of the Taiping Era* [*Taiping Yulan*] , *juan* 79, 365). This actually shows that the Yellow Emperor was located in the middle of the five phases. In the "Five Regulators" (" Wuzheng") in "Shiliu Jing," the Yellow Emperor says, "I wish to publish and apply the Five Regulators … grasp the compass in the left hand and the set-square in the right." Here "regulators" (*zheng*) appears to mean "politics" (*zheng*), but as Wei Qipeng says, here it must be related to the "compass, set-square, carpenter's line, scale, and crossbar."[18] Liu Bin uses the Mawangdui silk manuscript *Essentials* (*Yao*) and "Wuzheng" in *Huangdi Sijing* to show that the "five regulators" of the "compass, set-square, carpenter's line, scale, and crossbar" were very likely related to the *Book of Changes* (*Zhou Yi*) trigrams and had to correspond with the four seasons and five directions; hence, "grasp the compass in the left hand and the set-square in the right" must correspond to the *qian* and *kun* trigrams. Therefore, the image of the Yellow Emperor in the *Huangdi Sijing* was intimately related to the five phases, and can only be reasonably interpreted in combination with techniques and calculations.[19]

In "Shiliu Jing": "Liming" it is stated that after the Yellow Emperor "acted on his position and carried out his consultations," "He numbered the days, reckoned the months, and computed the years in order to match the movements of the sun and moon." The chapter "Observation" ("Guan") says that the Yellow Emperor ordered his minister Li Hei to "announce the restrictions and establish the limits" to create the rules. It also says that the Yellow Emperor "began by distinguishing [Heaven and Earth] into two and separating them to make Yin and Yang." This content is all related to techniques and calculations, and accords with the image in received texts of the Yellow Emperor creating systems and order, and disseminating knowledge and techniques. "Shiliu Jing": " Xingshou" says, "Heaven possesses a permanent core; Earth possesses a permanent constancy"; whilst in the " Jingfa": " Daofa" chapter, we find, "The constant regularities of Heaven and Earth are: the four seasons, darkness and light, growth and decay, the soft and the hard"; the "Sidu" section of the "Jingfa" refers to "reaching the extremity of Yang by means of death and reaching the extremity of Yin by means of life," and to "the periodicities of the sun and moon, planets, and constellations, the regularities of the four seasons"; it also refers to "eight correctnesses," "seven laws". The "Lunyue" of the "Jingfa" refers to "the Way of

Heaven and Earth," "the principle of Heaven and Earth," "the main thread of Heaven and Earth"; and *Sande* refers to a "Heavenly constant."[20] "Heavenly rites" were not empty words with forceful tones, but rather taboos and norms that were effective in actual life, were well known by the people, and had to be followed; these taboos and norms were all related to techniques and calculations. Although it is not directly indicated that these were the words of the Yellow Emperor, their strong outlook on the Heavenly Dao and Yin and Yang and their taboo-related tone show that they very likely were related to the words of the Yellow Emperor.

The Yellow Emperor also often appears in excavated texts related to military strategists, such as in the Yinqueshan (銀雀山) Han tomb bamboo slip, *Sunzi's Art of War* (*Sunzi Bingfa*), which contains the chapter "The Yellow Emperor Attacks the Red Emperor" ("Huangdi Fa Chidi"), a lost text not found among received texts. This text may have been an interpretation of the section of *Sunzi's Art of War* known as "Marching the Army" ("Xing Jun") : "The advantages of these four types of army placement are such that the Yellow Emperor used them to vanquish the Four Emperors." Based on the arrangements of the Green, Red, White, Black and Yellow Emperors, they are clearly related to the five phases.[21] The Zhangjiashan (張家山) Han tomb bamboo slip text *Helu* says, "The Yellow Emperor's campaign against all under Heaven" was only successful after employing "the Heavenly seasons," "Yin and Yang ," "forms and virtue," "the Dao of the Sun and Moon," and "the Dao of the five phases," fully reflecting a tone of military Yin and Yang, as well as techniques and calculations.[22]

We often say that an important feature of Huang-Lao thought is that it "uses the Heavenly Dao to elucidate the affairs of man." This is not an empty theory. The Heavenly Way can only be truly applied to the affairs of man and be formed into general principles that can be followed by means of the knowledge, techniques, taboos and norms disseminated and stipulated by the "words of the Yellow Emperor." Huang-Lao thought relies on real, effective political authority and operable systems established by the "words of the Yellow Emperor" in the style of techniques and calculations. Therefore, even though this content is, in principle, closely related to the Lao school, it has different functions and plays different roles from it. So we should not overemphasize the relationship between Huang-Lao thought and the Lao school, while undervaluing the words of the Yellow Emperor. We cannot truly understand Huang-Lao thought without clarifying the origins, content and roles of the words of the Yellow Emperor.

3 The Relationships Between the Concepts of

“Forms and Names” and “Forms/Punishment and Virtue/Bounty” and Techniques and Calculations

In received texts , the expression “forms and names” (*xing ming;* 刑名 or 形名) is related to the Schools of Names, Legalists and Military Strategists, as well as to Huang-Lao. Su Qin says that those who study the intricacies of statements such as “a white horse is not a horse” are of the “Forms and Names school” (*Strategies of the Warring States* : “Strategies of Zhao” [*Zhanguo Ce*: “Zhao Ce”]); Liu Xiang says, “Deng Xi was from Zheng and liked the forms and names” (*Separate Records* [*Bielu*]) ; and Lu Sheng says, “Shi and Long became known to the world by rectifying forms and names ” (*Preface to Annotated Mozi Dialecticians* [*Mobian Zhuxu*])—these texts all seem to be related to the School of Names . In *Records of the Grand Scribe*: “Biography of Lord Shang” (*Shiji*: “Shangjun Liezhuan”) says, “When young, Shang Yang was fond of studying the forms and names.” In *Huainanzi*, “An Overview of the Essentials” (“Yaolue”), the following appears:

> Master Shen was the assistant of Marquis Zhaoxi of Han when the state of Han broke off from the state of Jin. The land of these states was barren and their subjects were hostile, being wedged between powerful states. The ancient rituals of the state of Jin had not yet been destroyed, while the new laws of the state of Han were repeatedly promulgated. Ordinances of the previous rulers had not yet been rescinded, while the ordinances of the later rulers were also being handed down. Since new and old contradicted each other and before and after undermined each other, the various officials were at cross-purposes and in confusion; they did not know what practices to employ. Thus, the writings on forms and names were born.

Liu Xiang’s *New Preface* (*Xinxu*) says, “Master Shen’s writings said that the ruler of men had a deep responsibility in grasping the technique to be formless, and by following rules, supervise his ministers; hence, the name ‘techniques’ [*shu* 术]. When Lord Shang wrote his book, he mentioned ‘the law.’ They all spoke of ‘ forms and names.’” These writings all appear to be related to Legalism. According to *Heguanzi*’s “Arms of the Age” section (*Heguanzi*: “ Shibing”), “Because the Dao has measures and numbers, the deities of heaven and earth can be communicated with; because things have mutual overpowering, water and fire can be used; because of east, west, south, and north, forms and names can be trusted.” In *Sunzi’s Art*

of War, “Configuration” (“Shi”) , advises that: “Managing masses of troops is similar to managing a small group of soldiers; it is a question of division and enumeration. Sending masses of troops into combat is similar to sending small groups of soldiers into combat; it is a question of forms and names.”[23] In the *Mozi*, the “ Flags and Pennons” section (*Mozi*: “Qizhi”) states, “then create a flag based on the form or name.” In the *Records of the Grand Scribe*, the section “Biography of Laozi and Han Fei” (*Shiji*: “Laozi Han Fei Liezhuan”) says, “Shenzi’s teachings were based on Huang-Lao and advocated the forms and names.” It goes on: “Han Fei was the first prince of the state of Han. He was fond of the theory of forms, names, methods, and techniques, which could be traced back to Huang-Lao.” In *Guanzi*: “Techniques of the Mind I” (*Guanzi*: “ Xinshu Shang”) it is noted that “things have forms, forms have names, and sages give the names.” Although the philosophy in the *Xinshu Shang* is inclined toward Daoism, it differs from that of Lao-Zhuang; it is commonly recognized in the academic world as typical Huang-Lao thought. In the *Hanfeizi*, references to “forms and names” can mainly be found in “Two Handles” (“ Erbing”), “Wielding Power” (“ Yangquan”), “Way of the Ruler” (“ Zhudao”), and “Criticisms II” (“Naner”). It is commonly accepted in academic circles that “Yangquan” and “Zhudao” are both rich in Huang-Lao thought. Lu Dian’s *Heguanzi*: “Preface” (*Heguanzi*: “Xu”) says, “Heguanzi has a contrary Way, its writing starts on the foundation of Huang-Lao and ends by following forms and names.” It is evident that “forms and names” were also closely related to Huang-Lao thought.

That “forms and names” could be used by the school of Names , Legalists, Military Strategists, and Huang-Lao Daoists shows that these terms were not particular to or solely invented by any one school, but rather were features of the common needs of these four schools; that is, they were all concerned with verifying facts, distinguishing quantities, reviewing distinctions, differentiating possibilities and elucidating right and wrong. As mentioned above, Huang-Lao thought was not a hollow, abstruse philosophy, but rather a practical political theory with specific, operable content. One important feature of Huang-Lao thought was that even though it was led by the Dao, which was above the forms, it fused “names” and “the law,” and emphasized the systems and rules below the forms. Therefore, it was very normal for Huang-Lao thought to combine with “ forms and names.”

Before excavated texts such as the *Huangdi Sijing* appeared, scholars often looked at “forms and names” from the perspective of “forms and names matching” and “seeking truth from names,” and thought that this was a technique with which rulers controlled their subjects. The appearance of the *Huangdi Sijing* gave us a new understanding of “forms and names.” References to “forms and

names" appear extremely frequently in the *Huangdi Sijing* and the order is sometimes reversed to "names and forms." For example, "Daofa" says, "when names and forms have been determined, things correct themselves." The *Huangdi Sijing* has references to both "correcting names" (*zhengming*) and "persistent forms" (*hengxing*). I believe that in the *Four Classics,* there is no substantial difference in meaning between "names" and "forms," and that neither is subordinate to the other; both can be regarded as having "set positions and due forms." "Correcting names and revising forms" and "correcting names and applying forms" appear in the "Guan" section of "Shiliu Jing," and based on the context, these have the meaning of applying laws and decrees.[24] "Names" and "forms" here both mean laws and decrees, and sometimes the one character "names" is used to represent the two characters "forms and names." Therefore, the implications of " forms and names" in the *Huangdi Sijing* are related to order, rules and norms.[25]

The *Huangdi Sijing* also especially emphasizes discussing "forms and names" from the perspective of generation, and states that even though the Dao is formless and nameless, those with the Dao must know and understand " forms and names." As long as "forms and names" are erected, then it is easy to govern all under Heaven. The "Daofa" includes the following passage:

> The Way of seeing and knowing is merely vacuity and nonexistence. As for vacuity and nonexistence, when an autumn hair brings an object into existence, it necessarily has a form and a name. If form and name are established, then the distinction between black and white has been made. Therefore, the way in which he who grasps the Way looks at the world is to be without tenacity, to be without fixed location, to be without action, to be without partiality. For this reason, every worldly affair makes a form and name, reputation, and claim for itself. If forms and names have been established, and reputations and appellations are set up, then there is nowhere to conceal one's tracks or hide one's true aims.

This passage says that the Dao of "seeing and knowing" (i.e., knowing and understanding the world) lies in the attitude of vacuity and nonexistence. If we adopt an attitude of vacuity and nonexistence, we know that even small things must have their "forms and names." Once the "forms and names" of things are established, then "the distinction between black and white," namely, the features and positions of things and standards of right and wrong, is also established. When those who grasp the Way are controlling the affairs of the world, they need only adopt the attitude of "without tenacity,"

"without fixed location," "without action" and "without partiality." When something happens in the world, these "forms and names" (as definite order and norms) and "reputations and claims" (as policies and orders) will naturally play their role. As long as the system of "forms and names" (set position and order) and "reputations and claims" (policies and orders) is established, nobody can escape its control and management. The result of establishing " forms and names" is "distinguishing between white and black," that is, after the position and attitude of all things in the world are established, right and wrong are evident. "Reputations and claims," that is, the system of policies and orders, can only be established after the standard of right and wrong is established, and thereafter, no object can escape rule and control. Nearly identical expressions can be found in the sections "Assessing Essentials" and "Names and Principles" (" Mingli") in " Jingfa":

> Thus, the way he who grasps the Way observes the world is that he necessarily fully investigates and observes where affairs begin to arise, and fully investigates their forms and names. When forms and names have been fixed, opposition and compliance have their positions, the dying and the living have their distinctions, and survival and destruction, rise and decline have their places. When after that he compares them with the Constant Way of Heaven and Earth, then he determines where misfortune and good fortune, death and life, survival and destruction, rise and decline are located. For this reason, in initiating myriad affairs, he does not lose the principles, and he assesses the world without any miscalculations. Therefore, to be able to establish the Son of Heaven, to appoint the Three High Officials, and have the world obey them, is called "Possessing the Way." ("Mingli")
>
> The manner in which the person who grasps the Way observes the world, sees the correct Way, and accords with the principles is by being able to calculate the curved and the straight and to enumerate the ends and beginnings. He is therefore able to accord with names and inquire into principles. Forms and names derive from reputations. When the reputation and the reality blend and harmonize, fortune and disaster, abolishment or establishment are like a shadow following the form, like the echo following the sound, like the beam of a steelyard not concealing the light and the heavy weights. ("Mingli")

In the *Huangdi Sijing,* the principal political task of "he who grasps the Dao" is inspecting forms and names, and determining whether things have "correct names" or "deviating names." When performing this task, "he who grasps the Dao" follows the sequence in which the

Dao generates all things, and first examines the status of being “formless” and “nameless.” Clearly, in political operations, “formless” and “nameless” refer to the state of having no system or order. Establishing “names” and “forms” from the “formless” and “ nameless” refers precisely to order and rules. Let us look at the following discussion in “Cheng”:

> Dao has no beginning, yet has a response. When it has not yet come, consider it nonexistent; when it has come, be similar to it. When an object is about to come, its form precedes it. Establish it by means of its form; name it by means of its name.

Therefore, the scope in which the expression “ forms and names” is used in the *Huangdi Sijing* is not primarily between the lord and subject, and its main meaning is not in supervising, punishing infringements of, or manipulating the “laws and techniques” of subjects. It represents those set, unchanging norms and systems of humankind related to reward and punishment, and these systems use the Dao as their starting point. This manner of discussing “forms and names” from a generative perspective is not used by the Schools of Names , Legalists or Military Strategists. Of course, this is related to the Huang-Lao Daoists’ intentional use of this method to differentiate between the spheres of the Dao and tools (*qi;*器) (essence and phenomenon, above and below the forms), highlighting the supreme status of the Way. For example, in the section of the *Zhuangzi* titled “The Way of Heaven” (“Tiandao”) says:

> Therefore, the ancient book has: “There are forms and there are names.” The ancients did have the concept of forms and names, but it is not what they put first. When the ancients discussed the great Dao, it was only after five steps that they mentioned forms and names, and only after nine steps that they spoke of rewards and penalties. If they had spoken of forms and names right from the start, it would have shown that they did not know what is fundamental. If they had spoken of rewards and punishments right from the start, it would have shown that they did not know what is primary.

Gushu (古書) means “ancient books,” and it is evident that there were books in ancient times that explored the question of “forms and names.”[26] As *Zhuangzi*: “Tiandao” understands it, these “ forms and names” and “rewards and penalties” are on the same level, and facing the “great Dao,” the two are far down in the hierarchy.

In that case, where did this generative theory of “forms and names” come from? Is it possible that the Huang-Lao Daoists

borrowed it from folk techniques and calculations, or that they used the expressions of the techniques and calculations school to lay out their own theories?

The Shanghai Museum bamboo slip *Hengxian* contains the following passage:

> "Presence" comes from "possibility," " generation" comes from "presence," "intentions" come from "generation," "words" come from "intentions," "names" come from "intentions," "affairs" come from "names."

The following passage from *Heguanzi:* "Circular Flow" (" Huanliu") corresponds to this:

> With One, there is energy; with energy, there is intention; with intention, there is planning; with planning, there are names; with names, there are forms; with forms, there are affairs; with affairs, there is agreement. When agreement is decided, time is generated; when time is established, things are generated. Therefore, energy added to itself creates time, agreements added to themselves create periods, periods added to themselves create results, results added to themselves create gain and loss, gain and loss added to itself creates the auspicious and inauspicious, and all affairs added to themselves create victory and defeat. There is nothing that does not come from *qi;* pass through the Way, agree on things, be corrected by time, depart from names, and take shape under the law.

Even though there are some differences between the *Hengxian* and the *Heguanzi*'s "Huanliu" section, their overall structure is similar, and both discuss how all types of constructions with forms in human civilization are generated from the formless. We can list the processes for comparison.

> *Hengxian:* Possibility (*huo*); presence (*you*); generation (*sheng*); intention (*yi*); words (*yan*); names (*ming*); affairs (*shi*)
>
> *Heguanzi:* One (*yi*); energy (*qi*); intention (*yi*); plans (*tu*); names (*ming*); forms (*xing*); affairs (*shi*); agreements (*yue*); times (*shi*); things (*wu*)

Compared with the *Heguanzi*, the *Hengxian* expresses less content, but other passages in the *Hengxian* mention that before "possibility," there is also "absence" and "*primordial constancy*," which is "plain, quiet, and empty" in nature; it also mentions *qi*. Therefore, "possibility and presence" in the *Hengxian* is actually not substantially different

from “one *qi*” in the *Heguanzi*. The latter part of the *Hengxian’s* “words, names and affairs” corresponds to the *Heguanzi*’s “plans, names, forms and affairs,” and even though “forms” does not appear in the *Hengxian,* through a comparison with the *Heguanzi,* we believe that the *Hengxian* simply does not need to mention “forms.” Both “words, names and affairs” and “plans, names, forms and affairs” refer to human political constructions that have forms. It is worth noting that both the *Heguanzi* and *Hengxian* have methods of expression that are similar to those of techniques-and-calculations texts such as *Taiyi Shengshui*. The method of exposition ordering the fundamental elements of the universe in sequence has a clear techniques-and-calculations tone. *Taiyi Shengshui* says:

> The Great One generated water, water then assisted the Great One, and Heaven was formed in this way. Heaven then assisted the Great One, and Earth was formed in this way. Heaven and Earth [assisted one another], and the numinous and the luminous were formed in this way. The numinous and the luminous assisted one another, and Yin and Yang were formed in this way. Yin and Yang assisted one another, and the four seasons were formed in this way. The four seasons assisted [one another], and cold and hot were formed in this way. Cold and hot assisted one another, and wet and dry were formed in this way. Wet and dry assisted one another, and years were formed and the progression ended. Now, the years were generated from the wet and dry. The wet and dry were generated from cold and hot. Cold and hot and the four seasons were generated from Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang were generated from the spirits and illumined. The spirits and illumined were generated from Heaven and Earth. Heaven and Earth were generated from the Great One.

It creates a complete image of the generation of the universe from the Great One, through water, Heaven, Earth, Yin and Yang, the four seasons, cold and hot, wet and dry, to years.

Let us also look at the following content from the Shanghai Museum bamboo slip *Collected Sayings I* (*Yucong Yi*) :

> There was Heaven, mandate, Earth, and forms [slip 12], there were objects, content, color, and names [slip 13], there was mandate, patterns, and names, and only then [slip 4] there was Gun [slip 5], there was Earth, forms, and exhaustion, and only then [slip 6] there was Hou [slip 7] [.][27]

The Shanghai Museum bamboo slip *Yucong I* has a mixture of contents. Its overall philosophical tendency is toward Confucianism ,

but it is interspersed with Daoist lines. The above examples all mention “forms” and “names.” Even though we do not know whether “forms” and “names” were corresponding concepts then, the two were clearly of great importance. From the context, “forms” and “names” were incorporated into the generative systems of “Heaven,” “Earth,” and “mandate.” It is nearly impossible to find similar content in received Confucian texts . Could we therefore consider the possibility that the descriptions of these generative systems were taken from techniques-and-calculations theory concerned with fundamental questions such as cosmic order, civilization and systems, and those were used in *Yucong I?*

The Mawangdui Han tomb silk manuscripts include a silk picture. Its first interpreter, Chen Songchang , pointed out: “This silk picture is divided into three levels. The outermost level is a square frame painted red, with text along the inside. The second level is a circle painted green with text along the outside. The third layer is a circle in the center, with black text forming a cloudlike twisting circle. The text, which rotates outward from the center of the circle, is shaped like the painted cloud pictures resembling solar and lunar halos in *Assorted Astrological and Meteorological Divinations* [*Tianwen Qixiang Zazhan*] and has clear visual significance.”[28] That is, in this picture, which resembles a diviner’s board (*shipan*), there is a square on the outside and circle on the inside, and three different passages of text with different contents were painted in these three positions. Chen Songchang believes that the innermost text is related to “Dao” and “mind,” the second level of text is related to “words,” and the outermost square-frame text is related to “ forms and names.” The outer layer of text has the following content:

> Things have forms, things have names, things have words, words have [no words],[29] … bright … uses knowledge … return.

In my research, I believe that this is a simple diagram which attempts to use a diviner’s board to explain the Daoist “mind techniques” theory. Its content can be reasonably interpreted through Huang-Lao texts such as the *Guanzi*’s “Xinshushang”. The text spiraling out from the center can be understood as being in the shape of the mind, and it is mainly aimed at showing how man should cultivate his mind, understand all things using an attitude that conforms to the “Dao,” and understand “forms” and “names.”[30]

Since there are many missing sections, the lines cannot be fully understood. But combined with the image of the diviner’s board, we can imagine that the center that symbolizes the round Heaven is the “mind” that incorporates the “Dao.” The outer portion that symbolizes the square Earth is “forms and names” and “words,” and the middle

layer is “words.” This construction somewhat resembles the *Hengxian* and *Heguanzi* above. They both emphasize that Dao comes first, and “words,” “forms,” and “names” come later. Clearly, Dao and “mind” correspond to “Heaven,” and “forms” and “names” can only be matched with “Earth.” It is interesting that what seems to us today to be philosophical exposition was expressed in the form of a diviner’s board, a piece of equipment that was used daily for techniques and calculations. Was the diviner’s board used because the concepts of “Heaven and Earth” and “forms and names” were naturally related to techniques and calculations? Or was the techniques-and-calculations form of the diviner’s board, and of the concepts of “Heaven and Earth” and “forms and names,” used to stress the mysterious, absolute, and irrefutable thoughts that they wanted to express? We cannot know this, but the relationship between “forms and names” and techniques and calculations has been proven, as has the fact that “forms and names,” as an important concept in Huang-Lao philosophy, may have originated from techniques and calculations.

Let us look again at “forms/punishment and virtue/bounty” (*xing de*), an expression that is extremely common in the *Huangdi Sijing*. Even though many studies have looked at this in recent years, most emphasize its philosophical aspect; as Jin Chunfeng says, “forms and virtues thought is an integral part of the dialectical thought of the silk manuscripts .”[31] Cui Yongdong believes that the Yin, Yang , forms and virtue theory of the *Huangdi Sijing* “started the naturalization process of ancient Chinese legal culture.”[32] Some explore whether “forms” or “virtue” are emphasized more.[33] Very few scholars analyze the relationship between “forms and virtue” and techniques and calculations. Actually, as will be shown below, the relationship between these two is clear.

Hu Wenhui gives an accurate summary of the significance of the term “forms and virtue”:

> The concept of “forms and virtue” was originally a concept with political and social significance (punishment meant to kill and massacre, and virtue meant to celebrate and reward); later, under the influence of the Yin-Yang school , “forms and virtue” became a Yin-Yang concept (punishment is Yin and killing, virtue is Yang and generation). On this foundation, “forms and virtue” became a techniques-and-calculations concept, and was full of significance in being auspicious, inauspicious, suitable, and unsuitable. Finally, “forms and virtue” became a technique of demonstrating the effectiveness of divination.[34]

We can say that “forms and virtue” in both received and excavated texts can basically reflect the above three states.

In Huang-Lao texts, it is extremely common for “forms and virtue” to mean “kill and reward.” Chen Songchang has made a very good analysis of this. However, he also states:

> Based on the content in the *Yellow Emperor’s Books*, the original and figurative meanings of “forms” and “virtue” are basically used. That is, concepts of political philosophy corresponding to concepts such as “civil and martial” and “the Way and the law” do not yet have much techniques-and-calculations content. The sort of concept usage of “virtue in spring and summer, forms/punishment in fall and winter” that connects the four seasons with forms/punishments and virtue is still far removed from the concepts used in the silk manuscript *Forms and Virtue* [*Xingde*] .[35]

I cannot agree with this point.

With the archaeological discoveries of recent years, many “forms and virtue” texts related to divination and military Yin-Yang have appeared. For example, the Mawangdui Han tomb silk manuscripts *Forms and Virtue* A, B and C, the Fuyang Shuanggudui Han tomb *Forms and Virtue*,[36] the Shuihudi Qin bamboo slip *Calendar* A: “Years” (“ *Rishu” Jia Zhong* “Sui”) chapter, and the *Juyan New Bamboo Slips* (*Juyan Xinjian*) all have content related to “forms and virtue.”[37] Their features are the combination of “forms and virtue” with Yin-Yang and the five phases, and add together the 28 constellations of heavenly bodies, 12 deities, 12 Heavenly generals, the foundation-elimination (*jianchu*) cycle, five directions, five tones, nine offices, and eight winds to create an extremely complex system. [Proponents of] the techniques-and-calculations school uses a simple diviner’s board form to model the basic framework of the universe they wish to describe, relying on the left and right rotations of the Heavenly and Earthly plates to infer and display the operation of that system. For example, the Mawangdui silk manuscripts *Forms and Virtue* A and B have two pictures involving a “universe diagram,” or the so-called diagrams of great travels (movement of the years) and lesser travels (movement of the sun). In the diagram of great travels (movement of the years), the positioning targets of the “universe diagram” are the two deities of “forms” and “virtue.” They can be used to infer the position of the two deities in any year, thereby obtaining the positions of left, right, front, back, auspiciousness and inauspiciousness. In the diagram of lesser travels (movement of the sun), the positioning targets of the “universe diagram” are the many deities of “forms,” “virtue,” “Fenglong,” “Dayin,” “Fengbo,” “Leigong” and “Yushi,” which can be used to express the day to which each deity belongs and to provide the appropriate day for each level of military rank (such as “general”).[38] That is, “forms” and “virtue” (including the application of “forms and

virtue") had already become specific techniques. Received texts such as the *Huainanzi* , *Heaven's Patterns* and *Book of Han: Record of Art and Literature* mention the "Sixteen schools, 249 chapters, and ten pictures" of the Military and Yin-Yang schools, and according to a minor preface of the Military and Yin-Yang schools, its theme is "Occurring along with the seasons, furthering forms and virtue, following battle, caused by the five victories, relying on ghosts and spirits, and being of assistance." "On Virtue" ("Lunde") and "On Forms" ("Lunxing") in *The Great Meaning of the Five Phases* (*Wuxing Dayi*) also belong to this kind of "forms and virtue" techniques-and-calculations theory.[39]

However, techniques-and-calculations theory is not limited to explicit references to "forms and virtue" for divination techniques. The basic principle of "forms and virtue" is correspondence with Yin and Yang . Forms correspond to the moon, Yin, the *kun* trigram, inauspiciousness, disaster, harm, killing, punishment and removal of titles. Virtue corresponds to the sun, Yang, the *qian* trigram, auspiciousness, blessings, happiness, assistance, reward and granting titles. They correspond to the four seasons: spring and summer are virtue, and fall and winter are forms. We should say that this is the basic theory of "forms and virtue," and that using "forms and virtue" in divination techniques is simply a step towards complexity.

"Forms and virtue" as related to the above basic theory are extremely common in the *Huangdi Sijing;* they represent reward and punishment, and unite these two types of political actions with the Yin-Yang fluctuations and changes of the seasons in Heaven and Earth. For example, the "Guan" says: "correct them with forms and virtue"; "spring and summer are the seasons of virtue, autumn and winter are the seasons of forms—place virtue first and forms behind in order to nourish life"; "in general, the epitome of conquest lies in forms and virtue" (see also "The Fights of the Surnames" [" Xingzheng"]); "forms and virtue are august indeed: the sun and moon watch each other in order to make clear their complementarity"; and "now you should encourage the people's efforts according to the proper season, place virtue first and forms behind, and follow Heaven." "Xingzheng" says:

> Heaven's virtue is very august; if not for forms, it could not work. Very solemn are Heaven's forms; if not for virtue, they would be overturned. When forms and virtue nourish each other, opposition and compliance are then completed. Forms are dark and virtue is bright, forms are Yin and virtue is Yang, forms are obscure and virtue is conspicuous.
>
> As for virtue, if one does not possess it, in managing forms, he

does not match them with the crimes. At rest, he lacks laws; in movement and rest, he is not in harmony with the correct names. For this reason, he will be executed, receiving punishment for his actions.

Even though "forms and virtue" in the *Huangdi Sijing* are not a technique for daily divination but rather rules for any time, what is most often discussed is the balance between "forms" and "virtue." However, there is no doubt that the relationship between "forms" and "virtue," concepts of auspiciousness/inauspiciousness and the correlation with Yin and Yang come from folk techniques and calculations. The *Huangdi Sijing* simply refines the concept and selects from the details of techniques and calculations.

As mentioned above, the Zhangjiashan Han tomb bamboo slip *Gailu* is related to the "words of the Yellow Emperor" and contains many theories related to Military Yin-Yang. These include "Heaven and Earth are square and round, water and fire are Yin and Yang, the sun and moon are forms and virtue, they are established in the four seasons, divided in the five phases; those who follow them rule, those who violate them fail. These are the seasons of Heaven."[40] Because of the similarity with the views quoted from the *Huangdi Sijing* above, we cannot say that *Gailu* is related to techniques and calculations and that the *Huangdi Sijing* is not.

There are also countless examples of techniques-and-calculations that apply the basic theory of "forms and virtue" to political and military practice in received texts with a Huang-Lao Daoist leaning. Here are just a few examples:

Therefore, Yin and Yang are the great principles of Heaven and Earth. The four seasons are the great paths of Yin and Yang. Forms and virtue combine with the four seasons. When forms and virtue are combined with the right season, there is blessing; with the wrong one, there is disaster. (*Guanzi*: "Four seasons" ["Sishi"])

Virtue begins in spring and grows in summer; forms begin in fall and go on to winter. If forms and virtue are not lost, the four seasons are as one. If forms and virtue leave their homes, they will go against the seasons. Attempts will fail, and there will be great calamity. (*Guanzi*: "Sishi")

When Heaven is true to its sun virtue, the sun will be true when coming and going, south and north will reach their extremes, and everything will take Heaven as the norm. When heaven trusts its moon forms, the moon is trusted in death and life, there will be beginning after the end, and everything will consider Heaven as the model. (*Heguanzi*: "Kingly Blade" ["

Wangfu"])

King Hui of Liang asked Wei Liaozi: "I heard that the Yellow Emperor had forms and virtue, and could win one hundred of one hundred battles. Was this true?" Wei Liaozi replied: "No. What the Yellow Emperor called 'forms and virtue' meant attacking with forms and defending with virtue; they were not what the world of man calls 'forms and virtue.' The Heavenly constellations, seasons, sun, and Yin and Yang would turn against what the world of man calls 'forms and virtue.' The Yellow Emperor was simply involved in the affairs of man." (*Wei Liaozi*: "Heavenly Offices" ["Tianguan"])[41]

Guanzi: "Sishi" and *Heguanzi*: "Kingly Blade" both give political theories that use Yin, Yang, forms and virtue to govern people. The example of *Wei Liaozi*: "Heavenly Offices" shows that "forms and virtue" theory was used in divination and in the affairs of man. When used in the affairs of man, it was a little plainer in tone, but even though the two could be distinguished, they were not completely unrelated.

The concepts of "Yin-Yang ," "hard-soft," and "male-female" in the *Huangdi Sijing* were also often seen in folk techniques and calculations, and Huang-Lao philosophy may have taken them from folk thought.

4 Linguistic Characteristics of Techniques and Calculations in Huang-Lao Texts

Techniques-and-calculations texts have very prominent linguistic characteristics that differ from most texts in two regards. The first is word choice: techniques-and- calculations texts like to use the following words or compounds to indicate results, and give the feeling of incantations: auspicious, prosperity, strength, victory, advance, smooth, thriving, success, growing, long-lasting, quiet, settled, no incidents; inauspicious, calamity, diminish, weak, lose, retreat, opposition, disaster, strange, disorder, kill, slay, execute, exterminate, misfortune, injustice, illness, death, loss, mourning , break, ruin, harm, damage. They often use the phrase "Heavenly X" to indicate reward or punishment from the Heavenly Emperor or from nature. They often use "advantageous," "permissible," "do not," or "impermissible" to indicate what is appropriate and inappropriate. The sentence structure of "which is called" (or "this is called," "this is named," "this is ordered," or "called") is often used, and the phrases are often concluded with numbers. The second feature is that the tone is crisp, concise, direct, distinct and unmuddled. Long-winded arguments are not given, and literary expositions are not used. A

resolution for the matter at hand is given, often in the form of an order and with an indubitable authority and self-confidence. These texts show that causes must have effects, and show the method of thinking that links certain causes to certain effects. They incorporate relevant information so the right action can be taken. The aforementioned word choice-characteristics correspond to this kind of tone. Here are a few examples:

> In the fourth month, this is called increased thriving; small matters will succeed and large matters will be celebrated; other matters that are neither small nor large will be fully auspicious. Benefiting the farmers is called the three thriving. Going to battle at the right time is called the three victories. (Shuihudi Qin tomb bamboo slip *Calendar* A 34, front)
>
> Jiao is called having small opposition; there is no great calamity. It is permissible to drill wells, run water, cover houses, drink and entertain, and dress to mourn one's parents. If there is loss, there will not be success. It is not permissible to marry a bride, marry off a daughter, or move goods or livestock in or out. It is not permissible to become an official, eat or drink, entertain, or offer sacrifices. (Shuihudi Qin tomb bamboo slip *Calendar* A 38, front)[42]
>
> Do not bury in the early morning; there will be great mourning. (Shuihudi Qin tomb bamboo slip *Calendar* A 105, front 2)
>
> Do not pray in the late morning; it will bring calamity. (Shuihudi Qin tomb bamboo slip *Calendar* A 107, front 2)[43]
>
> Virtue is in Earth; this is named not bright, there will be obstruction throughout the day, and rulers' orders will not be carried out. Attempts to handle affairs will be met with breaking, ruin, and loss, and even victory will bring calamity. (Mawangdui Han tomb silk manuscript *Forms and Virtue* B, lines 39–40)
>
> Virtue is in Wood; this is named showing off. Attempts to handle affairs will greatly strain the hearts of the people, superior men will leave court and lesser men will turn their backs on the people and flee. If matters are successful, there will be calamity in Heaven. This is called tension, and those who handle matters first will see their land diminish and soldiers weaken. (Mawangdui Han tomb silk manuscript *Forms and Virtue* B, lines 41–42)[44]
>
> East is on the left and West is on the right; East is external and North is internal. This is called the Way of following Heaven. With disorder, there will be breaking and loss; with rule, man will last long. (Zhangjiashan Han tomb bamboo slip *Gailu,* slips 7–8)
>
> Not ruling all under Heaven is named impermissible. Rule

without compliance is named disordering the rules. (Zhangjiashan Han tomb bamboo slip *Gailu,* slip 55)[45]

Similar word choices and tone can be found in the *Sande* and the *Huangdi Sijing*. Here are a few examples:

Yang with darkness is called great sorrow. Darkness with Yang is called inauspicious. Orderly and steadily, the external and internal are distinguished, and men and women have morals. This is called the Heavenly rites. Respect it, respect it, the Heavenly Mandate is clear. If it is opposed, there will be inauspiciousness and calamity. Do not insult government officials as lesser than the deities; do not be at leisure, seek gain, or harm relatives. This is called criminal. If the ruler has no head subject, this is called dangerous, and the state will be harmed. (Shanghai Museum Chu bamboo slip *Sande,* slips 3–4)

If the ruler loses his position, then the state will be devastated; if the ministers lose their posts, then orders will not be carried out: this is what is called an "Undisciplined State." If there are two rulers, then the ruler will lose his brightness, male and female will contend for authority, [and] the state will have rebellious soldiers: this is called a "Destroyed State." ("Jingfa": " Liufen")

If the eldest son acts as the father, it is termed the "Highest Defiance." If the assembled ministers abandon their purposes, and great ministers act as rulers, it is termed "Blocking Obstruction." Such a situation in a strong state will lead to it being pared down; in a middle-sized state, it will lead to it being broken; in a small state, it will lead to it being destroyed. When planners of strategy are in positions on the outside, it is termed the "Completion of Opposition," and the state will not be at peace. Such a situation in a strong state will lead to danger; in a middle-sized state, [it will lead] to it being pared down; and in a small state, [it will lead] to it being broken. If the ruler loses his position, but the ministers do not lose their posts, it is termed the "Root Outside": misfortune will be close at hand. Such a situation in a strong state will lead to distress; in a middle-sized state, [it will lead to] to danger; and in a small state, [it will lead] to it being pared down. If the ruler loses his position and the ministers lose their posts, it is termed "Being without a Basis" and "Superiors and Inferiors Lacking Roots": the state will suffer great injury. Such a situation in a strong state will lead to its being broken; in a middle-sized state, [it will lead] to its being destroyed; and in a small state, [it will lead] to its being obliterated. ("Jingfa": "Liufen")

If lord and subject change positions, it is called "Opposition";

> if the worthy and the worthless stand together, it is called chaos; if movements and quiescence are not timely, it is called opposition; if life and death do not correspond to the appropriate season and circumstances, it is called violence. If there is opposition, the basis will be lost; if there is chaos, official duties will be lost; if there is opposition, Heaven will be lost; [if there is violence], Man will be lost. If the basis is lost, then [there will be damage]; if official duties are lost, there will be encroachment; if Heaven is lost, there will be famine; if Man is lost, there will be epidemics. (“Jingfa”: “Sidu)”

Through comparison, it is not hard to see that they both have extremely similar word use, sentence structure and tone; both painstakingly simplify cause-and-effect relations and clearly provide methods of thought with concrete answers; and both have the characteristics of being rooted in the present and immediately effective. Of course, the Legalists and Military Strategists also have these pragmatic features of being rooted in the present and immediately effective, but these examples have absorbed much of the language of the techniques-and-calculations school used to express suitable and unsuitable behavior, which resembles incantations. Based on the expressions “the Way of Heaven,” “the Heavenly Constant,” “Heavenly rites,” “Heavenly punishment” and “Heavenly order,” which reflect the notion of predestination, it is not mistaken to say that certain sections of *Sande* and the *Huangdi Sijing* have a rich techniques-and-calculations flavor. In recent years, Suzuki Tatsuaki has focused on the rhyming language found in the *Zhuangzi* . He points out that of the 33 chapters of the *Zhuangzi,* more than half have rhyming lines, and there are many more rhyming lines in the outer and miscellaneous chapters than in the inner chapters.[46] He uses this kind of analysis to confirm the textual characteristics of Huang-Lao thought seen in the *Zhuangzi,* which provides a fresh approach. Further studies may demonstrate whether texts written in techniques-and-calculations style often contain rhymes.

5 Conclusion

The relationship between Huang-Lao thought and folk techniques and calculations has major academic significance for studies of Warring States , Qin and Han intellectual history as it relates to the Huang-Lao school. However, this is an extremely complex problem that involves a wide range of issues and requires the discussion of many events from intellectual history. This chapter only provides a simple and superficial analysis using individual examples; it leaves many topics for further study. For example, thought related to Yin and Yang and

the five phases is an important area that has not fully been laid out here. Is the “Heaven, Earth, Man” construction often seen in Huang-Lao texts related to techniques and calculations? After the Huang-Lao school died out, was its techniques-and-calculations content related to the rise of early religious Daoism? While Huang-Lao thought developed, the influence of techniques and calculations must have undergone a process of moving from heavy to light use and from direct appropriation to careful selection; how did this process unfold? These questions are worth investigating fully.

Footnotes

1

I do not approve much of using the name *Huangdi Sijing,* and I am opposed to taking the four lost ancient texts in front of the *Laozi B* as one complete work completed by one person at one time. I am using the name *Huangdi Sijing* for the moment here out of consideration of academic custom and for the convenience of discussion.

2

Guo Moruo 郭沫若, *shi pipan shu: Jixia huang-Lao xuepai de pipan* (Ten Critiques: Critique of the Jixia Huang-Lao School) (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1996), pp. 142–173.

3

Even though “Lüelun Huang-Lao xue” was written in the 1960s, it was not formally published until the 1990s in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* (*Studies of Daoist Culture*) 14 (1998).

4

For publications and academic developments, see “Huang-Lao sixiang” (Huang-Lao Thought), in *Liang han zhuzi yanjiu lunzhu mulu* (*1912–1996*) (Catalog of Studies of Han Philosophers [1912–1996]), ed. Chen Ligui 陳麗桂 (Taipei: Hanxue yanjiu zhongxin, 1998), Section 1, pp. 413–454, and “‘Huang-Lao boshu’ yanjiu zongshu” (Overview of “Huang-Lao Silk Manuscript” Studies), in Zhang Zengtian 張增田, *huang-Lao zhidao jiqi shijian* (The Huang-Lao Way and Practice). Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 2005, pp. 294–312. [For a selection of translated articles on Huang-Lao research, see “The Many Faces of Huang-Lao,” *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 34 (1) (Fall 2002)—Ed.].

5

For example, in *Huang-Lao Xue Lungang* (Overview of the Huang-Lao School) (Jinan: Shandong daxue chubanshe, 1997), Ding Yuanming 丁原明 argues that the works related to the “Yellow Emperor ” were falsely attributed and that the “Huang school” actually had no special theory system (see pp. 21–25).

6

Ge Zhiyi 葛志毅 is an exception, as his two papers “Huangdi yu Huangdi zhi xue” (The Yellow Emperor and the Yellow Emperor School) and “‘Huang-Lao boshu’ yu Huang-Lao zhi xue kaobian” (An Investigation of the “Huang-Lao Silk Manuscripts” and the Huang-Lao School) (both can be found in his *Xian Qin liang han de zhidu yu wenhua* [Pre-Qin and Han Systems and Cultures] [Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 1998]), as well as his investigations of the *Huangdi Sijing,* give detailed investigations of the Yin-Yang-school characteristics of the so-called words left by the Yellow Emperor; see pp. 133–151 and 152–175, respectively. Apart from the work of Ge Zhiyi, however, these types of investigations are not at all common.

7

Techniques and calculations (*shushu*) are also called *fangshu* and *fangji,* and generally refer to behavioral choices, such as techniques for selecting auspicious and inauspicious days and divination. I use a somewhat broader scope, and take it to refer to knowledge and techniques that play decisive roles in everyday production and life, and are related to taboos and precepts.

8

Cao Feng 曹峰, “‘Sande’ suojian ‘huanghou’ wei ‘huangdi’ kao” (Investigation into “Empress” as “Emperor” in *Three Virtues*), in *Shangbo Chu Jian Sixiang Yanjiu* (Studies in Shanghai Museum Chu Bamboo Slip Thought). Taipei: Wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 2006, chap. 12, pp. 231–240.

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10

Cao Feng 曹峰, “‘Sande’ suojian ‘huanghou’ wei ‘huangdi’ kao” (Investigation into “Empress” as “Emperor” in *three Virtues*), in *shangbo chu jian sixiang yanjiu* (Studies in Shanghai Museum Chu Bamboo Slip Thought) . Taipei: Wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 2006, chap. 12, pp. 231–240.

11

Examples can be found by the Qing writer Ma Su in *yiwen leiju* (Collection of Arts and Letters), vol. 11; *Taiping yulan* (Imperial Readings of the Taiping Era), vol. 79; and *Yishi* (History Unraveled), vol. 5. For contemporary scholars, see Qian Mu’s 錢穆 1944 *Huangdi* (Yellow Emperor), chap. 2, “Huangdi de gushi” (The Story of the Yellow Emperor). Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2004, pp. 7–37; Yasutaro Mori , *Kotei densetsu* (The Legend of

theYellow Emperor) (Kyoto: Jingdu nüzi daxue renwen xuehui, 1970), pp. 149–174; Chen Ligui , *Zhanguo shiqi de huanglao sixiang* (Huang-Lao Thought in the Warring States), chap. 1, "Huang-Lao sixi- ang de qiyuan—Cong Huangdi de chuanshuo tuice" (The Origins of Huang-Lao Thought: Inferred from Yellow Emperor Legends). Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1991, pp. 1–38; Ge Zhiyi, "Yellow Emperor and Yellow Emperor Studies," "Yi, Xihan yiiqian zhushu zhong suojian Huangdi zhi yiyan yujiao" (One, Words, and Doctrines of the Yellow Emperor Seen in Pre-Western Han Writings) (Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 1998), pp. 133–137; Zhong Zongxian 鐘宗憲, "'Huangdi' xingxiang yu 'Huangdi xueshuo' de kuice—Jian yi fanxing 'Huangdi sijing' de ruogan wenti" (Seeking Out the Image of the Yellow Emperor and Yellow Emperor Theory—Also, Reflections on Several Issues in the Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor), paper from the "International Conference on Newly Excavated Texts and Rebuilding Pre-Qin Thought," Taiwan University, March 25–26, 2005, paper no. 22 (the appendix in this paper sorts through the images of the Yellow Emperor in the Song *yunji qiqian: Xuanyuan benji* [Seven Tallies from the Cloud Box: Annals of Xuan Yuan]).

12

Yang Rubin 楊儒賓. *"Huangdi yu diyao—Xian Qin liangzhong tianzi de yuanxing" (The Yellow Emperor and Emperor Yao: The Original Forms of Two Pre-Qin Sons of Heaven)* , paper from the *"International Conference on Newly Excavated Texts and Rebuilding Pre-Qin Thought,"* Taiwan University, March 25–26, 2005, paper no. 19, p. 2.

13

Chen Ligui 陳麗桂, *Huang-Lao Thought in the Warring States , chap. 1, The Origins of Huang-Lao Thought: Inferred from Yellow Emperor Legends* . Taipei: Linking Publishing, 1991, p. 10.

14

Qian Mu 錢穆, *Yellow Emperor* . Beijing: Joint Publishing Co., 2004, p.21.

15

For the relationship between the medical scholars and the Yellow Emperor , see Wei Qipeng 魏啟鵬, *"Mawangdui gu yishu zhong de Daojia yu yijia" (Daoists and Medical Scholars in the Ancient Lost Mawangdui Texts)*, *Daojia wenhua yanjiu (Studies in Daoist Culture)* 3 (1993): 360–377. See also *mawangdui hanmu boshu* Huangdi shu *jianzheng (Notes on the Mawangdui Han Tomb Silk Manuscript "Yellow Emperor Texts")*Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2004), pp. 319–337.

16

Cao Feng 曹峰, "Investigation into 'Empress' as 'Emperor' in *Three Virtues*" gives a detailed explanation.

17

See Cao Feng 曹峰, "A Comparative Study of *Three Virtues* and *the Four classics of the*

Yellow Emperor," pp. 241–266. Furthermore, the Qing writer Yan Kejun offers some discussion of methods and techniques in *Jinren Ming* (Jin Engravings) in *Quan shanggu sandai Qin han sanguo Liuchao wen* (Complete Texts of High Antiquity, the Three Dynasties, Qin, Han, Three Kingdoms and Six Dynasties) and the style is very similar to that of warnings and exhortations. The songwriter Wang Yinglin 王应麟 believed that *Jinren Ming* was one chapter of *Huangdi Ming* (Yellow Emperor's Engravings) from Hanshu: "Yiwen Zhi" (Book of Han: Record of Arts and Letters).

18

See Wei Qipeng 魏啟鵬, "Boshu Huangdi wuzheng kaoshi" (Interpretation of the Silk Manuscript Yellow Emperor's Five Regulators) from *Notes on the Mawangdui Han Tomb Silk Manuscript "Yellow Emperor Texts,"* pp. 338–343. Originally from *Huaxue* (*Sinology*) 3 (1998).

19

Liu Bin 劉彬, "Boshu *yizhuan* 'Yao' pian 'Wuzheng' kaoshi" (Interpretation of "The Five Regulators" from the Silk Manuscript *yizhuan* "Essentials" Chapters), *Zhouyi yanjiu* (*Zhou Changes Studies*) 2 (2007): 12–18.

20

Sande (*Three Virtues*) says, "Do not wail at dawn, and at night, do not sing, play string music, or fast in solitude; this is called the Heavenly constant." Yan Changgui believes that this corresponds with the Shuihudi Qin bamboo slip *Rishu* (*Calendar*) A, 155 rear: "On the last day of the month … do not sing. On the first day of the month … do not wail," and *Yanshi Jiaxun*: "Fengcao" (Family Instructions of Master Yan: Character and Behavior) : "The Dao books say: If you sing on the last day of the month or wail on the first day of the month, there will be suffering." It is apparent that this section was completely taken from techniques and calculations. See Yan Changgui 晏昌貴, "'Sande' sizha" (Four Slips from *Three Virtues*), *Jianbowang*, available at www.bsm.org.cn (accessed July 6, 2006).

21

The Yinqueshan Han tomb bamboo slip "Didian" (Earth Classic) chapter is also a Yellow Emperor text related to Yin-Yang and techniques and calculations, but an arranged version has not been officially published. See Wu Jiulong , *yinqueshan hanjian shiwen* (Explanation of the Yinqueshan Han Bamboo Slips) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1985). See also Li Ling, *Jianbo gushu yu xueshu yuanliu* (Ancient Bamboo and Silk Texts and Academic Origins), lecture 11, *Fulu wu* (Appendix 5) (Beijing: Joint Publishing Company, 2004), pp. 395–397.

22

Zhangjiashan 張家山 Han Tomb No. 247 Bamboo and Silk Arrangement Group, ed., *Zhangjiashan hanmu zhujian "ersiqi hao mu"* (Zhangjiashan Han Tomb Bamboo Slip "Tomb No. 247") (Revised explanation edition) (Beijing: Cutural Relics Press, 2006), pp. 161–167.

23

The “forms and names” here are referred to by Cao Cao as follows: “flags and banners are called forms, bells and drums are called names”; they are a type of command signal.

24

Shiji: Qin shihuang benji (*Records of the Grand Historian*: “Annals of Qin Shihuang”) says that in the thirty-seventh year there was a stone engraving of “The Qin sage ascended the throne and started to formulate the laws [forms and names] and clearly announced the old rules. He first organized the legal system and carefully delineated professional duties to create a long-lasting system.” The reference to “forms and names” here simply means “laws.”

25

For relevant discussions, see Cao Feng , “‘Huangdi sijing’ suojian ‘ming’ de fenlei” (Categorization of “Names” Seen in *The Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor*), *Hunan daxue xuebao* (*Journal of Hunan University*) 1 (2007): 19–24, and “‘Huangdi sijing’ suojian ‘zhidaozhe’ yu ‘ming’ de guanxi” (The Relationship Between “Those Who Follow the Way” and “Names” in *The Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor*), *Hunan daxue xuebao* (*Journal of Hunan University*) 3 (2008): 15–20.

26

“There are forms and there are names” is close to “Things have forms, forms have names” from *Guanzi: “*Xinshu Shang” (*Guanzi*: Art of the Mind A). “Art of the Mind” has a canon and explanation section, and “Things have forms, forms have names” is a line from the canon, so it may have come from an “ancient book.”

27

Kakuten sokan, “‘Goso’ 1, 3 hen ni mieru ‘Mei’ no kenkyu” (Research of the “Names” Seen in *Collected Sayings* I and III of the Guodian Bamboo Slips), ed. Tokyo University Chinese Philosophy Institute, *Zhongguo zhexue* (*Chinese Philosophy*) 18 (2002) gives a detailed analysis of these lines.

28

See Chen Songchang 陳松長, “Mawangdui boshu ‘wu ze you xing’ tu chutan” (Preliminary Investigation of Mawangdui Silk Manuscript “Things Have Forms” Picture), *Wenwu* (*Cultural Relics*) 6 (2006): 82.

29

The author does not give a reason for adding the two characters *wu yan* (“no words”).

30

Cao Feng 曹峰, “Mawangdui boshu ‘wu ze you xing’ tu yuanquan nei wenzi xinjie” (A New Interpretation of the Text in the Mawangdui Silk Manuscript “Things Have Forms” Picture Circle), ed. Zhang Guangyu and Huang Dekuan, *Guwenzi xuelun gao* (*Paleography Papers*) (Hefei: Anhui University Press, 2008).

31

Jin Chunfeng 金春峰, “Lun ‘Huang-Lao boshu’ de zhuyao sixiang” (On the Main Thought of the “Huang-Lao Silk Manuscripts”), *Qiusuo* (*Seek and Discover*) 2 (1986): 54–60.

32

Cui Yongdong 崔永東, “Boshu ‘Huangdi sijing’ zhong yinyang xing de sixiang chutan” (A Preliminary Investigation of the Yin-Yang and Forms and Virtue Thought in the Silk Manuscript *Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor*), *Zhongguo zhexue shi* (*History of Chinese Philosophy*) 4 (1998): 77–82.

33

Zhang Zengtian 張增田, “‘Huang-Lao boshu’ zhi xing de guanxi zhu shuobian” (Theories of the Relationship between Forms and Virtue in the “Huang-Lao Silk Manuscripts”), *Guanzi xuekan* (*Guanzi Journal*) 3 (2002): 40–44.

34

Hu Wenhui 胡文輝, “Mawangdui boshu *Xingde* yipian yanjiu” (A Study of the Mawangdui Silk Manuscript *Forms and Virtue* B), in *Zhongguo zaoqi fangshu he wenxian congkao* (*Collected Studies on Early Chinese Techniques and Texts*) (Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 2000), pp. 159–219.

35

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36

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38

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39

Li Ling, *Zhongguo fangshu zhengkao* (*An Investigation of Chinese Techniques*) (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2006), pp. 35–38, explanation of "forms and virtue."

40

Zhangjiashan Han Tomb Bamboo Slip "Tomb No. 247" (ibid.), p. 162 .

41

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42

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43

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44

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45

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46

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4. The Literary Structure and Characteristics of the Thought in the Bamboo Manuscript Known as *All Things Flow into Forms* (*Fanwu Liuxing*)

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1 Introduction

The Chu State bamboo manuscript *Fanwu Liuxing*,[1] housed at the Shanghai Museum , is a special treatise. We believe it is special because it is very challenging to match its content thoroughly with any transmitted text, or with recently excavated texts . Some of the content of *Fanwu Liuxing* is similar to the poem "Questions to Heaven" (*Tian wen* 天問) of the *Chu Verse* (*Chuci* 楚辭) collection of poetry in that it instigates a series of wide-ranging questions regarding why we exist along with other beings in the world, and how spiritual and all sorts of natural phenomena came to be, maintaining a tone of insatiable curiosity throughout. Whilst some content of the *Fanwu Liuxing* is closer to the *Laozi* or the four chapters of the *Guanzi*,[2] maintaining that only one who "grasps the Dao" or the "One" and is a highly cultivated Sage Person can manage to "not lose the hundred things", "know the kingdom," "govern the clans," "draw the kingdom together" and "draw together the kingdom and govern it".

The *Fanwu Liuxing* is not only a text that demonstrates uncommon imagination and profound contemplation; it is also written entirely in rhyming verse, so that it is full of poetic devices and may even be

considered to be an epic poem.[3] Therefore, whether in terms of thought or literary skill, it may be considered academically valuable. At present, most research on the text focuses on examination of graphs and the parsing of them, or of the proper ordering of the bamboo slips; even where some analyses touch upon the rich content of the text, such research is still in its early stages. This author feels that before we can engage in deep and systematic research, it is of the utmost importance that we clearly state our views on the literary structure and characteristics of the thought contained in this text. This chapter seeks to make some attempts to achieve this. The *Fanwu Liuxing* exists in two separate manuscript copies, Copy A, which is in fairly good condition, and Copy B, that is relatively heavily damaged. Compiler Cao Jinyan's 曹錦炎 transliteration has been published and we find that the text has been altered in many places in terms of the ordering of slips, parsing and interpretation of graphs. Where we quote directly from the *Fanwu Liuxing* text we are, for the most part, using the text from the postgraduate reading group at the Fudan University's Excavated Texts and Ancient Writings Research Centre for all the quotes from Copy A, which is entitled, "Shanghai Museum (7) —*Fanwu Liuxing* New Interpretation" (or "New Interpretation" hereafter),[4] and where we quote from different versions we will make it clear in the footnotes. Finally, unless necessary to the discussion, we will not include slip numbers in our quotations of the original text.

2 The Literary Structure of the *Fanwu Liuxing*

The literary structure of the *Fanwu Liuxing* is lucid and the text contains eight explicit instances of the phrase "I have heard it said that …" (*wen zhi yue* 聞之曰).[5] The text begins with the first section (or *zhang* 章) and the words,

> All things in the world emerge from non-existence into existence, what is it that makes them able to be created? From the appearance of the fetus to the physical form, what is it that preserves them from death? Having been created, what makes them able to observe and make noises? All things emerge from the root, why do some come later and some earlier? Yin and Yang (as opposite entities) coexist,[6] what makes them stable? Water and fire (as opposite objects) exist in harmony, what prevents discord between them?

This passage is similar in the questions it addresses and its means of expression to the following passage from the next section,

> I have heard it said that: The human fetus begins to form, what

allows it to be born? Having formed, it attains a physical form, is born and then what does it lose that makes it die? Although humans rely on something when they are born, they do not perceive the true state of what is around them to right and left (i.e. the idea that all things in the world are composed of sets of two opposing principles). Heaven and Earth establish the ultimate (principles) for humankind. Heaven sends down five kinds of measure (*du* 度) for humankind—how should I grasp them from the horizontal and the vertical? Five types of *qi* (氣) emerge together, how should I identify their similarities and differences? Humans speak with five different types of sound (*yan* 言 i.e. there is variety in the ways people think), who can provide fair judgements for them? Scholar-knights of the Nine Continents create plans, who can mark boundaries for them?[7]

聞之曰: 民人流形, 奚得而生? 流形成體, 奚失而死? 有得而成, 未知左右之請。天地立終立始, 天降五度, 吾奚衡奚縱? 五氣竝至, 吾奚異奚同? 五言在人, 孰爲之公?九有出謀, 孰爲之封?[8]

We believe that it may have been intended for there to have been an "I have heard it said that…" phrase at the beginning of the passage in the first section and that it may have been lost as the result of a copyist's error. Therefore, we might say that there are in fact nine instances of the repeated phrase "I have heard it said that …" in the *Fanwu Liuxing* text and that these form a clear structure and the theme of the treatise.

This kind of structure instantly makes us think of the Chu State bamboo manuscript *Cong Zheng* (從政), also part of the Shanghai Museum collection. *Cong Zheng* is a text written in the form of a collection of sayings. Despite its having suffered considerable damage, we are able to find 13 instances of the phrase "I have heard it said that … ." It is through this collection of 13 sayings that the author discusses matters for the attention of those in a position of governance, from varying points of view. If we do not hold ourselves to an exact repetition, but allow ourselves to look for similar phraseology, we find that similar literary structuring is seen in the Chu State manuscripts the *Ziyi* (緇衣) and the *Chengzhi Wenzhi* (成之聞之) both from the Guodian cache.

The *Ziyi* has 23 sections headed with the phrase, "The Master says …" (*zi yue* 子曰), whilst the *Chengzhi Wenzhi* contains similar literary structures in phrases such as, "the gentleman says …"(*junzi yue* 君子曰), "I have heard it said that …"(*wen zhi yue* 聞之曰), "The gentlemen of old said …" (*xizhe junzi you yan yue* 昔者君子有言曰) or in some cases directly quoting a passage from another text and then discussing that passage with a phrase such as, "the *Junshi* (君奭) text says …"

(*Junshi* yue 君奭曰) and so on.

Another point worthy of our attention is that after these introductory phrases such as, "I have heard it said that …", the following discussion employs compounds such as "hence," or "for this reason," then engages in further explication of the quoted material. The *Cong Zheng* manuscript is seriously damaged and so we cannot fully determine its original state; however, there is sufficient evidence for us to be sure that this similar type of structure exists in the *Cong Zheng* as well. Take for example the following passages,

> I have heard it said that: Benevolent people, are good people. Therefore, if having a good ruler … therefore the ruler is cautious before speaking, but acts conscientiously …
>
> I have heard it said that, the good person is good to other people. Hence, to gain a single worthy individual … therefore a gentleman is cautious towards speech, and not to actions … ."
>
> I have heard it said that: actions are undertaken by yourself, but reputation is obtained from others, a good reputation is difficult to obtain. … therefore, the ruler tries hard to manage his affairs well and waits for reputation to arrive.

Whilst this kind of structure is not obvious in the *Ziyi*, it is extremely patent in the *Chengzhi Wenzhi* , as we see in the phrases, "The gentleman says … therefore … (*junzi yue … shigu* 君子曰 … 是故 …"), "I have heard it said that … hence …" (*wen zhi yue … shiyi* 聞之曰 … 是以 …), "The gentlemen of old said … therefore …"(*xizhe junzi you yan yue … shigu* 昔者君子有言曰 … 是故 …), "The Junshi says … hence …" (*Junshi yue … shiyi*《君奭》曰…是以 …) and so on; such examples are easily found. In some instances we see a compound such as, "therefore" (*shigu* 是故) which appears to stand alone, but if we look more closely we find that the preceding passage is of the kind expounding principles, classical ideas or content that may be the words of earlier persons or classical texts being restated, only without the formulaic phrasing of, "… says." Although we do not deny the possibility that the passages following the compounds such as "therefore" and "hence" may also be derived from earlier sources, in most cases it seems reasonable to conclude that where the phrase, "I have heard it said that …" appears, the following content is usually a quotation from an earlier source and the passages following compounds such as "therefore" are ideas and interpretations offered by the author of *Chengzhi Wenzhi* .

To draw some general conclusions from texts prefixing certain passages with phrases or language that suggests that they are quoting from an earlier source, we might outline three major characteristics. The first is that this type of treatise does not have a very strict

structure or clear-cut edict; instead it is composed by drawing similar passages together, leading to a relatively loose structure. The second characteristic is that owing to this loose structure, the order of the text is more difficult to fix, so that the former and latter parts of the text and their various sections can be taken apart and rearranged and even added to or edited as required. The third characteristic is that passages following phrases such as "I have heard it said that …" are usually quotes from an earlier source that have been transmitted over the years and garnered a certain amount of influence and recognition, whereas compounds such as, "therefore" and "hence" indicate that the following passages are the text's current author engaging in further discussion of the preceding content.

Applying these conclusions to the *Fanwu Liuxing* we find that there is a structural difference between the three appearances of "I have heard it said that …" at the beginning of the text and the six that follow it. Here we will look at the first three examples,

Section 1:

> All things in the world emerge from nonexistence into existence, what is it that makes them able to achieve creation? From the appearance of the fetus to the physical form, what is it that makes them immune from death? Having been created, what makes them able to observe and make noises? All things emerge from the root, why do some come later and some earlier? Yin and Yang (as opposite entities) coexist, what makes them stable? Water and fire (as opposite objects) exist in harmony, what prevents discord between them?

Section 2:

> I have heard it said that: The human fetus begins to form, what allows it to be born? Having formed, it attains a physical form, is born and then what does it lose that makes it die? Although humans rely on something when they are born as such, they do not perceive the true state of what is around them to right and left (i.e. the idea that all things in the world are composed of sets of two opposing principles). Heaven and Earth establish the ultimate (principles) for humankind. Heaven sends down five kinds of measure for humankind – how should I grasp them from the horizontal and the vertical? Five types of *qi* emerge together, how should I recognize them from the perspectives of the same and the different? Humans can make five types of sound (i.e. there is variety in the ways people think), who can provide fair judgments for them? Scholar-knights of the Nine Continents create plans, who can mark boundaries for them? When I reach

old age, who will provide for me (how will I exist after death?) Spirits are born of people, why are they more powerful than people? Divest of bones and flesh, why are they (spirits) wiser and more perceptive than the living, where does their wisdom reach to? Who knows what the realm of their activity is? Spirits are born of people, why should I make offerings to them? Divest of bones and flesh, their physical bodies vanished, why should I make them offerings of food? Spirits and Deities are unknown in their comings and goings, where should I wait for them? How can I make the incense smoke float upwards in my offerings? How can I ensure that the spirits will be satisfied with my offerings? Following the Dao of Heaven, what is of capital importance? What must I do to gain a response from the Hundred Clans? How is Heaven able to perceive clearly? How are the spiritual powers of the spirits demonstrated to us? How were the early sage kings able to gain such wisdom?

Section 3:

I have heard it said: climbing to heights begins from a low place, reaching afar begins from a near place. A tree with broad girth began as a mere sapling. If on our feet we might travel one thousand li away, that must surely begin with one small step. What should one attend to in the case of the *Ri'er* of the Sun [a special cosmological phenomenon]? Who should one visit a punitive mission upon in the event of *Yueyun* of the Moon [another special cosmological phenomenon]? When the waters flow East, what should be filled? At sunrise, why does the sun appear large and yet its light does not hurt the eyes? Why at midday can a small goose obscure the sun? Who is higher than Heaven? Who reaches further than the Earth? Who made Heaven? Who made the Earth? Who made the Deity of Thunder? Who created Di (The Heavenly Emperor)? Why is the Earth flat? Why is water clear? Why do plants grow? Why do birds and beasts have voices? Whose perspiration falls as rain? Whose breath causes the wind?[9]

Whereas the latter six examples are as follows,
Section 4:

I have heard it said that: They who have grasped the Dao need only sit upright, they need not leave the place where they sit. Straightening their cap, they need only stand upright, they need not involve themselves with actual political affairs. (They who have grasped the Dao) have a prescience that reaches beyond the

Four Seas; their sensitive hearing reaches beyond one thousand li; their developed sight reaches beyond one hundred li. Therefore, the Sage Person need not move from the spot to foresee the stability or downfall of the state, whether there will be disorder.[10]

Section 5:

I have heard it said that: If the heart that would attain the Dao cannot conquer the heart that is concerned with political ability, there will be great disorder. If the heart that would attain the Dao can conquer the heart that is concerned with political ability, then that person will attain enlightenment. What is enlightenment? That person will have a pure heart. How do we know that someone has a pure heart? By observing whether they enjoy lifelong composure. Can you be a person of few words? Can you grasp the One? If so this is called the Miraculous Formation (*miao cheng* 妙成). I have heard it said that: The only thing the Hundred Clans prize is their ruler, the only thing the ruler prizes is his heart, the only thing the heart prizes is the One. Gaining the One, understanding its miraculous essence one may know that the One connects with Heaven above and with the depths of Water. Sitting down and contemplating the One, your wise plans will reach far far away; standing up and using the One, your influence will reach far and wide.[11]

Section 6:

I have heard it said that: Only through extreme quiet can one understand wisdom, they who grasp wisdom can understand deities, they who grasp deities understand Tong 同 understand 僮 (character unknown), they who grasp 僮 understand 困 (character unknown), they who grasp persistence understand return. Therefore old things will become new, those who have died will turn back into the living, water will return to the Pool of Heaven (*Tian chi* 天池). All things will be exempt from death, like the Moon, which goes out and in, which has an ends and beginnings, which arrives and departs. If you wish to grasp the One, you must unify your heart and cause your ears and eyes to be straight.

Section 7:

I have heard it said that: One gives birth to Two, Two gives birth to Three, Three gives birth to Four, After Four comes a conclusion. Therefore, having One, one has all under Heaven; losing the One, one loses all under Heaven. (Having grasped One)

one knows names without using one's eyes, and can hear sounds without using one's ears. Plants grow because they have One, birds and beasts have voice because they have One, (having grasped One) can serve the distant Heaven and give to humankind close at hand. Therefore, having grasped the Dao, it can be used to cultivate the person and govern the state.[12]

Section 8:

I have heard it said that: If one can grasp the One, nothing will be lost; if one does not grasp the One, all things will be lost. If you wish to grasp the One you can look up and see it above, look down and view it below, there is no need to seek it afar, only look to your own self. Obtaining the One and having plans for Under Heaven, you will be able to unite all under Heaven as one and take it for your own. Obtaining the One and having thoughts for the Under Heaven, you will be able to unify and govern it.

Therefore, to hold fast to the One is the principle of all in Heaven and Earth. Therefore, the One is a thing that you can taste when you chew it, smell when you sniff it, hear when you strike it, is visible up close and tangible when you reach out to hold it. However, you will lose it if you try to control it, it will wither if you try to destroy it, it will disappear if you try to break it. If you want to grasp the One, you must unify your heart and cause your ears and eyes to be straight.[13]

Section 9:

I have heard it said that: Having the One you will never be exhausted for the rest of your life; you may possess the people, you will gain the profit of the ten thousand people, and become the model for all in Heaven and Earth.[14]

It is worth pointing out that the first three examples all come in the form of questions without providing answers to those questions, and they also do not have a corresponding "therefore" component following on from them. However, the latter six examples differ in that although they seem to be questions, for the most part they are not in fact questions; it is not the case, as compiler Cao Jinyan suggests, that "each section of the text begins with a question."[15] The fifth section may be divided into two subsections either side of the sentence, "This is what is called Miraculous Formation" (*fu ci zhi wei miaocheng* 夫此之謂眇[妙]成). In Copy B of the *Fanwu Liuxing* there is a very clear punctuation mark after this sentence, which we feel is there to indicate to the reader that there is a change in content

coming. The second subsection then continues,

> I have heard it said that: The only thing the Hundred Clans prize is their ruler, the only thing the ruler prizes is his heart, the only thing the heart prizes is the One. Gaining the One, understanding its miraculous essence, one may know that the One connects with Heaven above and with the depths of Water. Sitting down and contemplating the One, your wise plans will reach far far away; standing up and using the One, your influence will reach far and wide.

It is highly likely that this passage is another quotation that the author "has heard said." A similar passage to the one above, "the only thing the heart prizes is the One. Gaining the One, understanding its miraculous essence one may know that the One connects with Heaven above and with the depths of Water" may be found in the "Inner Training" (*nei ye* 內業) and the second "Techniques of the Heart-Mind" (*xin shu xia* 心術下) chapters of the *Guanzi*. The relevant passage in the *Guanzi*: "Neiye" is, "The Dao fills all under Heaven and is everywhere amongst humankind, whilst the Hundred Clans know it not. By understanding the miraculous essence of the One, you can know that the One can communicate with Heaven above, and reaches Earth below, filling the Nine Continents." The passage, "Therefore those sage persons who understand the miraculous essence of the One can reach up to Heavens and down to Earth," from the *Guanzi*: "Xinshuxia," is also comparable.

Guo Moruo 郭沫若 makes the suggestion that the *Guanzi*: "Xinshuxia" was intended as an appendix to the "Neiye,"[16] that is, the "Neiye" is the main text , to which the "Xinshuxia" chapter provides annotated notes. We feel that this is a convincing proposition. Whilst the "Neiye" chapter does not contain many phrases of the "therefore …" type, both the first and second "Techniques of the Heart-Mind" chapters ("Xinshushang" and "Xinshuxia") contain an abundance of them, confirming that the chapter is structured so as to read as an annotation, with passages preceded by "therefore"-compounds appearing, in some cases, to introduce the explanations of later authors; in other cases, there is some explanation, then a "therefore" followed by a confirmation of the preceding content.

Section 5 of the *Fanwu Liuxing* also contains the phrases, "Can you be a person of few words? Can you grasp the One?" which resembles the language seen in the "Neiye" and "Xinshuxia" chapters:

> Concentrating my essence and *qi* and attaining a miraculous step, the ten thousand things can exist within my heart. Can you concentrate your essence and *qi*? Can you unify your heart's

intentions? Can you predict good and ill fortune without resorting to oracles? Can you understand cessation? Can you understand relinquishing? Can you rely on yourself and not on others? Think on it, think on it and think on it again. If you don't understand even then, spirits and deities will come to help you reach it. This is not the power of spirits and deities, it is the ultimate effect of essence and *qi*. (*Guanzi*: "Neiye")

Unifying your intentions and heart-mind, straightening your ears and eyes, you can predict future events as if before your eyes. Can you concentrate your essence and *qi*? Can you concentrate your essence and *qi*? Can you unify your heart's intentions? Can you predict good and ill fortune without resorting to oracles? Can you understand cessation? Can you understand relinquishing? Can you rely on yourself and not on others? Therefore, it is said: "Think on it, think on it and think on it again." If you don't understand even then, spirits and deities will come to help you reach it. This is not the power of spirits and deities, it is the ultimate effect of essence and *qi*. (*Guanzi*: "Xinshuxia")

Reading these two extracts from the *Guanzi* carefully, one finds that their use of language is highly similar. The "Xinshuxia" uses one more "therefore it is said" than is present in the comparable passage of the "Neiye," which indicates that although the "Xinshuxia" adds no new content to the passage it is intended to explain, the tone of voice is altered to become that of a later author recapitulating and explaining.

We find that within the *Fanwu Liuxing* text , the passages headed by, "I have heard it said that …" in the latter six sections share no small amount of content in common with the "Neiye" (we will return to this point in greater detail in the next part of this chapter); for example, the "Neiye" says, "Grasping the One (i.e. Dao) you can make all under Heaven surrender to you, establishing the One (i.e. Dao) you can make all under Heaven follow your commands," which may be read in conjunction with Sect. 9 of the *Fanwu Liuxing*:

I have heard it said that: Having the One you will never be exhausted for the rest of your life; you may possess the people, you will gain the profit of the ten thousand people, and become the model for all in Heaven and Earth.

The statement, "Another heart-mind is concealed within the heart-mind" in the "Neiye" can also be read in parallel with Sect. 5 of the *Fanwu Liuxing*:

> I have heard it said that: If the heart that would attain the Dao cannot conquer the heart that is concerned with political ability, there will be great disorder. If the heart that would attain the Dao can conquer the heart that is concerned with political ability, then that person will attain enlightenment.

From the above comparisons, we can draw the preliminary conclusion that the phrase, "I have heard it said that …" indicates content abstracted from previously completed works, works already seen as classics, whilst the compound "therefore" may indicate later comments, even statements appended by the author of the *Fanwu Liuxing*.

As we have said above, a text structured around a series of repeated, formulaic statements of, "I have heard it said that …" often has something of a loose structure. The content of such works can be grouped together as a whole or taken as individual segments, the order in which the sections appear can be rearranged and the structure overall has not been absolutely fixed to be as it appears at present. A possible reason why these fragments have been gathered together could be that they are focused on related topics. In that case, we might ask, what reason or topic has caused the fragments of *Fanwu Liuxing* to be drawn together?

Compiler Cao Jinyan has raised the point that the *Fanwu Liuxing* is a "layered and structured epic poem" that may be divided into nine sections, each beginning with the phrase, "I have heard it said that …" (in some cases either the first graph, "heard" *wen* 闻 or the third and last, "said" *yue* 曰 of the formulaic *wen zhi yue* is omitted).[17] These nine sections can be further divided into two parts, the first comprising four sections and concerning the rules of nature for the greater part, the second comprising the latter five sections and primarily concerned with the human realm. Although Cao Jinyan has not directly stated what he feels the relationship between these two sections ought to be, he does state that "the entire text contains questions without answers, has clear layers and a structure that is closely adhered to, followed step by step, the main meaning is obvious. By using the thought-provoking technique of raising questions without providing answers to those questions, the text provokes readers to maintain a sense of insatiable curiosity in searching for truth."[18] From this conclusion it would seem that he does not recognize the existence of a parallel between the first and second parts. He feels that both parts focus on raising questions, the difference being that the first part raises questions regarding nature whilst questions in the second part regard humanity.

Asano Youichi suggests that the *Fanwu Liuxing* is composed

through the combination of two completely different types of text . The first kind might be given the tentative name of, “Questions to Things” (*wu* 物), and is composed of two parts, the first running from bamboo slip 1, “All things in the world emerge from nonexistence into existence, …” to the middle of slip 8 (end of Sect. 2), “How were the early sage kings able to gain such wisdom?…” and the passage running from slip 9 (near the beginning of Sect. 3), “What should one attend to in the case of the Ri’er of the Sun [a special cosmological phenomenon] …” through slips 10, 11, 12 A and 13 B to the middle of slip 14 (end of Sect. 3), “Whose breath causes the wind?” The remaining slips (except for slip 27 in Sect. 3) may be taken as the second section, which might be given the tentative title, “Recognizing the One” (*Yi* 一).

Asano Youichi believes that the “Recognizing Yi” section is a text from the Daoist philosophical system of thought, whilst “Questions to Things” differs in that it is like the “Questions to Heaven ” poem from the *Chu Verse* , where the entire text takes the form of a verse composed as a series of unanswered questions. In comparison with the “Questions to Heaven ” poem which raises some 174 questions, the *Fanwu Liuxing* contains 43. These two fundamentally different types of text may have come to be copied together because of a similar passage after the “Questions” part and the beginning of the “Recognizing” part, both containing descriptions of flora and fauna. During the repeated copying of these two parts, the two have eventually lost their individual status and have been run together. Therefore, the *Fanwu Liuxing* should not be treated as a single, individual text, the two parts “Questions” and “Recognizing” should be treated as two separate texts. To recapitulate, Asano Youichi identifies the literary structure of “Questions” as that of a Chu-style poem, and “Recognizing” as a Daoist text, and believes that the two have been copied together through human error.[19]

We feel that as Asano Youichi suggests, the *Fanwu Liuxing* can be divided into two parts, and the two tentative titles that he suggests are suitable for the content, whilst his suggestion that the two texts are of different types is also reasonable. However, we take issue with the suggestion that the two texts were run together into one through a copyist error. Along the same lines, we object to Cao Jinyan’s point of view that there is no parallel or relationship between the two parts of the text that he identifies.

As this chapter has pointed out, the sections in which questions are raised are only Sects. 1–3. The following six sections do not contain further questions. Paying careful attention to the literary structure of the *Fanwu Liuxing*, one finds that the latter six sections do in fact present answers to the questions raised in the first three. We have

already looked at this question and the related texts in detail in the essay, “Looking at the Structure of Ideas in *Fanwu Liuxing* through Comparison with the “Zhouzhujie” chapter of the *Yizhoushu*”[20] [the “Zhouzhujie” chapter (周祝解) of the *Book of Yizhou* (*Yizhou shu* 逸周書)].

Internal evidence suggests that the response to the questions in the first part, “Why is the Earth flat? Why is water clear? Why do plants grow? Why do birds and beasts have voices? Whose perspiration falls as rain? Whose breath causes the wind?” (slip 3) are to be found in the following part, “Therefore having One, one has all under Heaven; losing the One, one loses all under Heaven. (Having grasped One) one knows names without using one’s eyes, and can hear sounds without using one’s ears. Plants grow because they have One, birds and beasts have voice because they have One, (having grasped One, one) can serve the distant Heaven and give to humankind close at hand” (slip 7). If you can understand and grasp the principle of the One, then you will know “why the plants grow, why the birds and beasts have voices” (slip y). Therefore, we cannot accept the suggestion that these are two passages that were run together through a copyist error. The various questions that are raised in formulaic fashion in the first part by the phrase, “I have heard it said that …”, questions regarding the principles governing human behavior and the existence of natural things, are answered using different forms of “I have heard it said”; for example, in a potential answer to slip 2, “Following the Dao of Heaven, what is of capital importance? What must I do to gain a response from the Hundred Clans?”, slip 9 states, “you may possess the people, you will gain the profit of the ten thousand people, and become the model for all in Heaven and Earth.” Although the only example we have of a truly direct answer to a question posed is the answer offered to the question, “Why do plants grow? Why do birds and beasts have voices?”, we might say that although the questions raised in the first three sections by the phrase, “I have heard it said that …” are strange and varied, they are all similar to the question, “what makes the plants grow? What makes the animals call out?”, whereas the latter six sections, although embarking from a different point, share the common aim of seeking evidence for the principles that underlie natural phenomena, which might be Dao or the One, as the highest principle behind existence. Therefore, the latter six sections focus on the topics of “Grasping the Dao” (*zhi dao* 執道), “Grasping the One” (*zhi Yi* 執一), “Obtaining the One” (*de Yi* 得意), “Having the One” (*you Yi* 有一), “The Ability to Unify” (*neng Yi* 能一), “Prizing Unity” (*gui yi* 貴一), “Prizing the Heart-Mind” (*gui xin* 貴心) and “Overcoming the Heart-Mind” (*sheng xin* 勝心).

Turning our attention to external evidence, although there are only

a small number of transmitted or excavated texts that share a similar literary structure with *Fanwu Liuxing*, such examples do exist, and we are able to present three of them.

Firstly, as compiler Cao Jinyan points out, the following passage may be found at the beginning of the “Tianyun ” chapter (天運) in the *Zhuangzi* :

> Does Heaven move? Is the Earth still? Are the sun and moon in their movements competing for the same position? Who commands these phenomena? Who manages these phenomena? Who is idle and inactive, yet pushes the movement of others? I suppose that there is something commanding and the changes have no choice but to change. I suppose that the changes having begun cannot stop? Are the clouds laid out for giving rain? Or do the rains bring about the laying out of clouds? Who is there, laying out clouds and bringing rain? Who is idle and inactive and creating these phenomena? The wind blows from the North, and goes West, then East then returns to the skies above. Whose breath makes it? Who sits idle and stirs up (literally fans) the wind? Tell me what are the causes of these things?

This passage is extremely like Sect. 3 of the *Fanwu Liuxing*, exploring the questions of what principles govern the sky, the earth and the formation of rain and clouds, asking, “Who makes it to be so? Who sets the weft and weave? Who remains in leisure whilst pushing these processes onwards?” and implying the question “who is in control of these changes? Who governs the processes? Who pushes them on whilst remaining in leisure?” The answers presented in the following part of the *Zhuangzi* : “Tianyun ” are extremely lengthy; in summary, the salient points are that only by rejecting recognition of the external aspect of things, experiential knowledge and standard rules, can one truly obtain Dao, and after that has happened one might obtain the answers to the above questions. The Daoist position adopted in “Tianyun” is very close to that adopted in the latter six chapters of the *Fanwu Liuxing* text .

Secondly, *Yizhoushu*: “Zhouzhujie” contains the following passage,

> Where is darkness? Where is light? Where is Yin (shade)? Where is Yang (brightness)? Where is short? Where is long? Where is supple? Where is rigid?[21] The sea is so big, why are we able to catch fish? The mountains so deep, why are we able to catch tigers, panthers and pixiu? The depths of human wisdom are so profound, why are we able to estimate the thoughts of others? Why can keep birds and beasts who walk on hoof and breathe through beaks? Jadestones are so hard, why can they be carved?

[22] Who gave the names of Yin and Yang ? Who governs the copulation of Female and Male? The ruler who cannot answer these questions will not attain happiness.

The initial sentences in this passage ask: where is dark and where is light? Where are Yin, Yang, short and long, soft and hard? These are qualities that form direct parallels with the dualistic opposition of the basic principles of Heaven and Earth. The *Fanwu Liuxing* also demonstrates similarly posed questions, including the parallels, “birth and death,” “former and latter,” “yin and yang,” “water and fire,” “endings and beginnings,” “vertical and horizontal,” “different and similar” and “left and right.”[23] The passage quoted above in the *Yizhoushu*: “Zhouzhujie” continues with increasingly specific questions, asking, in so many words, “why are we able to catch fish from the sea when it is so vast? Or tame wild cats when the mountains are so deep and impenetrable? Why are the wits of man perceivable when they are buried so deep? Why are we able to keep hoofed mammals as domestic animals?”, “Why can we carve jade which is so hard?”, “Who gave Yin and Yang their names?”, “Who causes the male and female to copulate?” These questions are comparable to those in the *Fanwu Liuxing* which ask, “why is the earth flat?” “why is water clear-flowing?” “why do plants grow?,” “why do beasts make noises?” and questions regarding the spiritual world, celestial bodies, Heaven and Earth and the weather.

In this passage of the *Yizhoushu*: “Zhouzhujie,” we see 12 fundamental questions raised in succession, but seemingly unrelated to the context of the chapter in which they appear. The key message in the *Yizhoushu* is, “if one is ignorant of Dao, one should be wary of disaster,”[24] with the text containing cautions such as: “For those who are unaware of the Dao, fortune becomes disaster,” “Those who are unaware of the Dao lose through fortune,” “Those who grasp the Dao cannot but become great,” “The ten thousand things have constant rules/ways, the ruler without the Dao will gradually be defeated,” “those skilled at using the Dao will never be exhausted,” “those skilled at using the Dao will never face disaster”; and “That Great Dao, having been formed will never change. Using that Great Dao, you will understand the crucial. Using it to manage all sorts of matters, ten thousand matters will go smoothly. Using the measure of the Dao you can unite people. Using it to manage affairs you will become a ruler. Promoting the rules of the Dao, all matters will be well ordered. Using it to manage people matters you will become the Son of Heaven.” Therefore, we can say that the *Yizhoushu*: “Zhouzhujie” claims that only through the Dao can these 12 fundamental questions be answered, only those who know the Dao can hold the reins of the

kingdom. This structure of raising and then answering questions, with answers based upon the principles of the Dao, is as close to the *Fanwu Liuxing* as if they had been written by the same hand.

Thirdly, the *Ten Questions* (*Shi Wen* 十問), one of the silk manuscripts excavated from the Mawangdui site, contains the following passages:

> The Yellow Emperor enquired of the Heavenly Master (天師), "What do the ten thousand things rely on to exist? What do plants rely on to grow? What do the Sun and Moon rely on to give off light?" The Heavenly Master replied, "If you would observe the state of Heaven and Earth, take the Dao of Yin and Yang as your principle, without this the ten thousand things cannot live and recreate, but by following that principle, they flourish."[25]
>
> The Yellow Emperor enquired of Rong Cheng (容成), "People obtain a physical form when the *qi*-energies of Yin and Yang congeal together, but what is it that they rely on in order to be born? Already having a human form, what do they lose that causes them to die? Why are there healthy and unhealthy people in every epoch? Why are some short-lived and some long-lived? I wish to know how the human body and its strength responds to work and leisure." Rong Cheng replied, saying, "If you wish to enjoy longevity, please observe the changes of Heaven and Earth. The Heavens have their changes, such as the waxing and waning of the moon, hence it is long-lived. The Earth has its changes, such as the cold and heat of the seasons and the varying altitudes of the ground, all of which are mutually creative, hence the Earth lasts forever and does not decay."
>
> The Yellow Emperor enquired of Cao Ao (曹熬), "What do people lose that causes them to die? What do they gain that causes them to live?" Cao Ao replied, saying, "[some characters missing] the key is drawing upon *jing*-essence and *qi*-energy through sexual cultivation to replenish the body. When the Yin and Yang energies of the male and female bodies combine, the movements must be slow and gentle. If you can move your body thus, it will bring pleasure to the female and she will produce five different kinds of sighs, only then should you ejaculate. By doing this, those with weak bodies will replenish their *jing*-essence and *qi*-energy, whilst those who are already strong will ensure that they remain strong for longer, whilst those advanced in age will lengthen their life-span."[26]

The questions that the Yellow Emperor asks the Heavenly Master , Rong Cheng and Cao Ao are extremely like those raised in Sects. 1 and 2 of the *Fanwu Liuxing*. We note that these are something like the set

examples often used in exploring the questions of the fundamental principles that govern all things. The *Ten Questions* raises and offers answers to questions regarding life and death, premature death and longevity; if one cannot observe the state of Heaven and Earth, the principles of Yin and Yang , if one is unable to adapt to the Dao of Heaven and Earth, to grasp the *qi*-energy of Heaven, Earth and the combined *qi*-energies of Yin and Yang, then a life of strength and longevity will be beyond such a person. The key points are slightly different to those emphasized in *Fanwu Liuxing*; however, we note that the format and structure in which these ideas are presented is here again very similar.

By perusing the internal and external evidence presented above, we ought to be able to understand why the "I have heard it said that" passages, which differ so greatly between the first three sections and the latter six sections, should be placed together in a subtle combination. To summarize, the literary structure of the *Fanwu Liuxing* lies in laying out nine sets of "I have heard it said that" passages, borrowing from existing, earlier sources or classical quotations, adding to these the interpretation of a later reader, attempting to offer answers to questions on all that exists in the world by appeal to descriptions of the Dao, the One and the Heart-Mind. The *Fanwu Liuxing* can be divided into two parts, the first comprising the first three sections which focus on raising questions, the second formed of the latter six sections which focus on offering answers, with both parts taken together to form a harmonious whole. Before we come to analyze the thought described within these, we must offer a thorough analysis of them as a literary text . This prevents us from barging into the text and taking over, taking passages out of context and deriving erroneous conclusions as a result.

3 The Characteristics of Thought in the *Fanwu Liuxing*

As the previous section of this chapter shows, the basic theme of *Fanwu Liuxing* answers questions that the everyday person may find incomprehensible by appealing to the Dao (or the One), explaining the workings behind the processes that drive all existence. The author utilizes a variety of resources to answer such questions, resources that for the most part are quotations of the words of individuals or classics that were already influential during the author's time. Following such quotations, the author uses a formulaic; "therefore" to introduce a contemporary view or the author's own understanding and interpretation of these words; these additions form the lesser part of the text. Therefore, we believe that in terms of content, *Fanwu Liuxing*

contains little original or creative thought; for the most part it is borrowed material, in which case, we ask the following questions: from whom did the author borrow and what parts were borrowed?

First let us look at the possible source of Sects. 1–3 of the *Fanwu Liuxing*. Compiler Cao Jinyan repeatedly and emphatically points out the similarities between the *Fanwu Liuxing* and *Heavenly Questions*, believing that they might be called "sibling" texts , and maintaining that the *Fanwu Liuxing* comes under the category of Chu State poetry. As we have shown in our analysis above, we believe that only the first three sections of the *Fanwu Liuxing*, that is the sections that raise questions without offering answers to them and that explore topics such as the natural world, human affairs, the spiritual world and the existence of spirits, can be said to be like the *Heavenly* Questions (*Tianwen* 天聞). The *Fanwu Liuxing* as a whole cannot be said to be particularly like the *Heavenly Questions*. We make this assertion on the basis that the *Fanwu Liuxing* is not a text that merely raises questions without offering answers to them. Further, comparing the two texts, there are no examples of sentences or phrases that closely mirror each other. *Ten Questions* is parsed in phrases mostly four to five characters long; it has a very different format to *Fanwu Liuxing*. Therefore, we can only really say that the *Fanwu Liuxing* and the *Heavenly Questions* may have shared some common resources as themes.[27] The *Heavenly Questions* is not necessarily the only text to pursue questions regarding the principles of creation of all things.

From the quotations given above from the *Yizhoushu*: "Zhouzhujie," the *Zhuangzi* : "Tianyun" and the Mawangdui silk manuscript text *Ten Questions*, we see similar questions raised in the bodies of these texts. Clearly, these questions are not necessarily part of the author's original work; rather they most likely originate from another source. Compiler Cao Jinyan also mentions that the *Zhuangzi*: "Tianyun" contains the passage, "In the South there is a strange individual called Huang Liao (黃繚), who asked why the sky does not fall down and what causes the wind, thunder and lightning."[28] The "Tang Asks Questions" chapter ("Tang Wen" 湯問) of the *Liezi* also contains the tale of "the young boy who asked about the sun." Obviously, curiosity about what brings creation into being is a theme that has caught the imaginations of people of all nations and races,[29] and this curiosity tends to focus around certain basic questions, such as why we are born and why we die, why the sky does not fall and so on. With so many people considering such popular questions over such long periods of time, these themes often form a chorus that is passed on and on. Therefore, although the source for the passages "I have heard it said that" in the first three sections of the *Fanwu Liuxing* may be shared with the source for material in the *Ten Questions* text ,

it is also possible that they do not share a common source at all. Comparing the phrasing of the two texts, all we can say with relative certainty at present is that the question-and-answer exchanges between the Yellow Emperor and the Heavenly Master , Rong Cheng and Cao Ao , have the most in common with *Fanwu Liuxing*.

Next let us look at the latter six sections of the *Fanwu Liuxing*. Surveying transmitted texts , we find that the *Laozi* and the four chapters of the *Guanzi* have the most in common with the latter part of the *Fanwu Liuxing*. However, when drawing any parallels between *Fanwu Liuxing* and the *Laozi*, we must look back again at Sects. 1–3 of the *Fanwu Liuxing* and discuss this passage:

> Climbing to heights begins from a low place, reaching afar begins from a near place. A tree with broad girth began as a mere sapling. If on our feet we might travel one thousand li away, that must begin with one small step.

This passage appears in both Copy A and B of the *Fanwu Liuxing*.

This is not posed as a question; its tone of voice stands out from its surrounding context. In Copy A this passage is followed by a clear punctuation mark, indicating that it is marked off from the passages that come before and after it. This passage cannot but remind us of Chap. 64 (in the Wang Bi recension, which will be referred to by chapter number hereafter) of the *Laozi*:

> When things are in a stable state, they are easy to grasp and master. When a problem shows no more than the first shoots, it is easy to find a solution. When things are still fragile, they are easily dissolved. When they are still minute, they are easily dispelled. One must act before the event takes place. One must take steps before disorder has begun. A tree so large it fills the span of one's arms grows from a seedling. A nine-story tower begins with piling up the first basket of earth. Even walking one thousand *li* begins with one small step.

Similar sentences also appear in the Guodian bamboo slip Copy A manuscript and the Mawangdui silk manuscript copies of the *Laozi* text. However, this passage in the *Laozi* is intended to remind us to pay attention to the early stages of development of different things, to grasp opportunities at the first moment, and to avoid difficulties and misfortune. The preceding chapter of the *Laozi* contains a similar message,

Difficult things must be approached from what is easy to do. Large matters must be begun with small actions. You must approach the difficult matters in this world from the point at which they are easy,

and the large matters of this world from the point at which they are small. The Sage Person always begins with the small, trifling and easy, and hence can achieve great things.

This passage reminds us to address difficulties and important matters whilst still in their early stages, also suggesting that the Sage Person is sure to begin doing something when only the earliest signs are apparent; although the task is easy, by doing it in a timely fashion, they can achieve great things. In the comparable passage in the *Fanwu Liuxing* we don't seem to find the same profound message, which urges us to grasp the immaterial through the material or to control what is already so through the not-yet-so. Passages that present worthwhile comparisons to that message can also be found in the "Encouragement to Learning" chapter (*Quan xue* 勸學) of the *Xunzi*,

Without the accumulation of steps, one will not reach the distance of one thousand li; without the accumulation of many rivulets, there would be no sea.

Therefore, we can say that these might be folk sayings that have accumulated over the years, and that the appearance of them in the *Laozi* text does not indicate necessarily that they are the original creation of the author of the *Laozi*; it could instead be the case that the author is quoting folk knowledge to lend power to his own point of view. Therefore, we are unable to prove conclusively that this saying originates with the *Laozi*. In which case, why does this extremely rational suggestion of approaching great matters from their feasible and more manageable aspects appear in the *Fanwu Liuxing*? Moreover, if it is proposed as a starting point for resolving questions of creation and development, and they each have fundamental bases, then shouldn't it appear in the latter six sections, rather than being squeezed into the first three? If all processes of development follow the principle of going from small to large, then we can identify a certain amount of connection to what follows in the *Fanwu Liuxing*, for example, the idea that celestial phenomena can presage major events in the human realm, that in China rivers run from the West to the East and into the ocean, of the great changes of the sun from sunrise to the midday sun overhead. However, this similarity only goes so deep; there is no similarity on the level of the questions that the author is intending to pursue as to why these phenomena should occur in the first place. Perhaps there is no deeper meaning here, and the passages are only placed together on the basis of a linguistic similarity and the appearance of the formulaic "I have heard it said that."

In the *Fanwu Liuxing*, the term Dao (道) appears only three times, the first time in Sect. 2 in the phrase, "following the Dao of Heaven" (*shun Tian zhi Dao* 順天之道). In this case, the term Dao is a limited conceptualization, rather than the Dao that is the root, source and

basis of all creation. The term “grasp Dao” (*zhi Dao* 執道) appears once each in Sects. 4 and 7. In this case, the term Dao can be identified without doubt as the elevated philosophical category that can be used to identify what maintains the existence of all things and is the primary principle and momentum behind them. It is worth noting that in the *Fanwu Liuxing* the term “the One” is often used in place of the Dao. In the text we see the phrases, “grasping the One” (*zhi Yi* 執一), “obtaining the One” (*de Yi* 得一), “having the One” (*you Yi* 有一), “being able to unify” (*neng Yi* 能一) and “prizing the One” (*gui Yi* 貴一) and so on. We find that in the *Fanwu Liuxing*, the way the terms the Dao and the One are treated and expressed shares much in common with the *Laozi*.

Section 4 of *Fanwu Liuxing* contains the passage:

> I have heard it said that: They who have grasped the Dao need only sit upright, they need not leave the place where they sit. Straightening their cap, they need only stand upright, they need not involve themselves with actual political affairs. (They who have grasped the Dao) have a prescience that reaches beyond the Four Seas; their sensitive hearing reaches beyond one thousand li; their developed sight reaches beyond one hundred li. Therefore, the Sage Person need not move from the spot to foresee the stability or downfall of the state, whether there will be disorder.

Whilst Sect. 7 contains the following:

Therefore, having One, one has all under Heaven; losing the One, one loses all under Heaven. (Having grasped One) one knows names without using one’s eyes, and can hear sounds without using one’s ears.

These passages indicate that only by grasping Dao and the One can a person transcend everyday sensory perception, and manage to be unfettered by everyday affairs, instead directly laying hands upon the truth of the world and achieving the state of doing nothing yet leaving nothing undone. This is like Chap. 47 in the *Laozi*:

> Know the affairs of the world without setting foot outside the door. Know the Dao that is self-so without looking out of the window. The further you travel, the less you know of the Dao. Therefore, the Sage Person knows the Dao without moving, and gives names without seeing the thing that is named, achieves without doing anything.
>
> (N.B. This chapter appears in the Mawangdui silk manuscript , but not in the Guodian bamboo manuscript.)

Although we do not find the term Dao in this passage of the *Laozi*,

it nevertheless beyond doubt offers us a description of the remarkable aspect of one who has grasped the Dao. The passage quoted above from *Fanwu Liuxing*: Sect. 7 (Therefore having One, one has all under Heaven; losing the One, one loses all under Heaven. (Having grasped One) one knows names without using one's eyes, and can hear sounds without using one's ears," continues with the following: "Plants grow because they have One, birds and beasts have voice because they have One," whilst Sect. 8 contains, "If one can grasp the One, nothing will be lost; if one does not grasp the One, all things will be lost." These passages may be read in conjunction with Chap. 39 of the *Laozi*:

> As of old, gaining the One has been so: Heaven gains the One and hence is bright, the Earth gains the One and hence is still, the shen-spirit gains the One and hence is miraculous, the rivers gain the One and hence are full, the ten thousand things gain the One and hence are born, kings gain the One and hence become rulers. To explain further, if Heaven did not remain bright it would break, if the Earth did not remain still it would quake, if ghosts and spirits did not remain miraculous they would disappear, if the rivers did not remain full they would dry up, if the ten thousand things did not maintain life they would die out, if kings did not preserve their position as rulers their status would be lost.
>
> (N.B. This chapter appears in the Mawangdui silk manuscript, but not in the Guodian bamboo manuscript.)

In the *Laozi*, we do not see the practice of using the One as a synonym for the Dao very often; the thirty-ninth chapter contains the greatest concentration of examples of this, otherwise the practice only appears in Chaps. 10 and 29 in the term, "embracing the One" (*bao Yi* 抱一). As to whether a person "obtains the One" (which also finds expression as "having the One" and "grasping the One" in the *Fanwu Liuxing*), and the decisive nature of the One over the ten thousand things, one might say with relative certainty that the *Fanwu Liuxing* and the *Laozi* are very close in terms of their ideas on these subjects.

In that case, can we say that what the author of the *Fanwu Liuxing* "has heard it said that," the content being close to passages from the *Laozi*, might even have originated from the *Laozi* text ? We feel that might be a premature conclusion. Whether in terms of literary features or ideas, the four chapters of the *Guanzi* seem to be the closest parallel to the *Fanwu Liuxing*, especially the "Neiye" and "Xinshuxia" chapters. We will revisit this question briefly here, whilst in the previous section of this chapter there are a considerable amount of quotations presented in support of this theory.

Do not allow external objects to disrupt the senses, do not allow

the senses to disrupt the mind, this is called “Inner Attainment” (i.e. gaining the Dao within). … The heart seeks nothing else, a tranquil heart resides within one’s breast, and the ten thousand things have their standard. The whole world is filled with the Dao, and it exists amongst the common people, although the hundred clans do not know it. The wondrous nature of one word (Dao) reaches up to Heaven and down to Earth, and fills the Nine Continents. How should it be explained? The key is in the peace of the heart-mind. Only when my heart is at peace, can my senses be at peace. Only when my heart is quiet can my senses be quiet. It is the heart that makes the senses stable, it is my heart that makes the senses peaceful. There is a heart hidden within the heart, there is another heart within the heart. For the heart within the heart, the idea is first, the verbal expression comes second, with the idea thought is formed, with thought language is created, with language there is the ability to arrange the hundred clans, only when that is done can there be government. If the hundred clans are not governed there will be disorder, and disorder leads to death.

Now let us look again at *Fanwu Liuxing*, Sect. 5:

I have heard it said that: If the heart that would attain the Dao cannot conquer the heart that is concerned with political ability, there will be great disorder. If the heart that would attain the Dao can conquer the heart that is concerned with political ability, then that person will attain enlightenment. What is enlightenment? That person will have a pure heart. How do we know that someone has a pure heart? By observing whether they enjoy lifelong composure. Can you be a person of few words? Can you grasp the One? If so this is called the Miraculous Formation (*miao cheng* 妙成). I have heard it said that: The only thing the Hundred Clans prize is their ruler, the only thing the ruler prizes is his heart, the only thing the heart prizes is the One. Gaining the One, understanding its miraculous essence one may know that the One connects with Heaven above and with the depths of Water. Sitting down and contemplating the One, your wise plans will reach far far away; standing up and using the One, your influence will reach far and wide.[30]

The similarities between the two passages are striking. In only a short amount of text , both have touched upon the topic of “governing the heart-mind” (*zhi xin* 治心), or “conquering” it (*sheng xin* 勝心). Both discuss the heart-mind as being dualistic, with one aspect being the public mind and the other being the essential mind. Both

emphasize the idea that if the latter cannot overcome the former, disorder will reign. Both maintain that nothing is beyond the ability of a person who can grasp the essential mind. All of the above features are discussed in terms of the relationship between ruler and subjects. *Guanzi*: "Neiye" provides a valuable point of comparison, without which the full and precise meaning of *Fanwu Liuxing* Sect. 5 would be more obscure.

Not only does the structure of *Fanwu Liuxing* Sect. 5 present striking similarities with the four chapters of the *Guanzi*, but the two texts are also surprisingly similar in their linguistic treatment of the term the One. The passage from *Fanwu Liuxing* Sect. 5, "the only thing the heart prizes is the One. Gaining the One, understanding its miraculous essence one may know that the One connects with Heaven above and with the depths of Water." seems to share a source with *Guanzi*: "Neiye":

> The wondrous nature of one word (Dao) reaches up to Heaven and down to Earth, and fills the Nine Continents.

Whilst *Fanwu Liuxing* Sect. 5, "Can you be a person of few words? Can you grasp the One?" can be read in conjunction with *Guanzi*: "Neiye":[31]

Can you concentrate your *jing*-essence and *qi*-energy? Can you focus your mind and attention?

Fanwu Liuxing Sect. 9 reads:

> I have heard it said that: Having the One you will never be exhausted for the rest of your life; you may possess the people, you will gain the profit of the ten thousand people, and become the model for all in Heaven and Earth.

This forms a parallel with *Guanzi*: "Neiye":

> Grasping the One, the whole world will submit, establishing the One the whole world will follow.

Fanwu Liuxing Sect. 8, "I have heard it said that: If one can grasp the One, nothing will be lost; if one does not grasp the One, all things will be lost," forms a neat parallel with *Guanzi*: "Neiye"; holding onto the One and not losing it, one can command the ten thousand things.

A phenomenon that cannot but leave us feeling great surprise is that practically every description of the One in the *Guanzi*: "Neiye" finds its parallel in the *Fanwu Liuxing*.

The term "One Extreme" (*Yi duan* 一端) meaning to "cause your ears and eyes to be straight" appears twice in the *Fanwu Liuxing* (in

the sentence in Sect. 8 “If you want to grasp the One, you must unify your heart and cause your ears and eyes to be straight”) and is a challenging term to interpret correctly. However, we can find a resolution for this conundrum in the *Guanzi*. Let us consider the following passage.

For the passage in the *Guanzi*: “Neiye”, “Having concentrated your *jing*-essence and *qi*-energy to a wonderful state, the ten thousand things will all exist within your breast,” an interpretation is offered in *Guanzi*: “Xinshuxia”: “Intentions are unified, as one in the heart-mind, the ears and eyes are upright.” Or, one’s intentions in the heart-mind should be unified, and one’s senses upright. Meanwhile the *Guanzi*: “Baixin ” states, “Remaining in harmony with objects, returning to the inner centrality, the physical body and emotions nurture each other. Unifying the thoughts in the mind, this is called knowing the Dao. On the border with using the Dao, one must unify one’s extremes, that is making one’s eyes and ears upright, preserving the empty peace at heart.”

According to these, we can infer that the sentence from *Fanwu Liuxing* may mean that if one hopes to grasp such a Dao, one must begin by holding the One in one’s heart and making one’s eyes and ears correct.

The term “flow into forms” (*liu xing* 流形) appears twice in the *Fanwu Liuxing*: in the first line which gives the text its title, “all things flow into forms” (*fan wu liu xing* 凡物流形) , and within the text “the people flow into forms” (*min ren liu xing* 民人流形), and twice in the phrase “the flow into forms gain bodies” (*liu xing cheng ti* 流形成體).

The “Water and Earth” chapter (*shui di* 水地) of the *Guanzi* says, “The original essence of people is water. When the *jing*-essence and *qi*-energy of man and woman combine, a child’s life emerges from water into physical form.” The same chapter also says, “formed after five months, born after ten.”

Although the Mawangdui silk manuscript *Ten Questions* contains the identical phrase, “fluid forms become bodies” (*liu xing cheng ti* 流形成體), we are inclined to say that such descriptions in the *Fanwu Liuxing* are more likely to come from a shared pool of knowledge with the *Guanzi*.

The *Fanwu Liuxing* contains the term “think on it” (*si zhi* 思之) in the phrases “To sit and think on it” (*zuo er si zhi* 坐而思之) and “To gain and think on it” (*de er si zhi* 得而思之). This is similar to the sentence, “Think on it, think on it then think on it again” (*si zhi, si zhi, you chong si zhi* 思之、思之, 又重思之) in the *Guanzi*: “Neiye.”

“Few of words” (*gua yan* 寡言) is similar to the expression “to not speak” (*bu yan* 不言) seen in the four chapters of the *Guanzi*. *Neiye*

says, “The sound that is expressed without language travels faster than thunder. The *qi*-energy of the heart-mind expressed on the outside, is brighter than the sun and moon, and clearer than the parent knows its child.”

The *Guanzi*: “Xinshuxia” says, “So you must know words without language, actions without action, and only then can you understand the weft of the Dao.”

Perusing the latter six sections of the *Fanwu Liuxing*, we find that the ideas contained therein are centered around three aspects. Firstly, that only a person who “grasps Dao” (or the One) can understand the workings and processes behind the creation of the world. Secondly, that only someone who overcomes their heart-mind and cultivates their person can grasp Dao (or the One). Thirdly, that only someone who overcomes their heart-mind, cultivates themselves and grasps Dao (or the One) can become a ruler and effectively rule over the clans of their kingdom. The way such questions are addressed in the four chapters of the *Guanzi* is more complex by far, but the crux of the arguments is basically the same as the three aspects mentioned above. One saying is particular to the *Guanzi*, and that is the repeated use of the term heart-mind (*xin* 心) in expressions such as, “There is a heart hidden within the heart, there is another heart within the heart.” The two texts are so close in terms of both guiding principles of thought and their expression that we may say with certainty that we have a definite lead in identifying the source of thought in the *Fanwu Liuxing*.

The four chapters of the *Guanzi* also contain explorations of the ultimate principles of the world we live in that are like those in the *Fanwu Liuxing*, for example the following passage from the *Guanzi*: “Baixin ”:

> Heaven seems to be supported by something, the Earth seems to be held up by something. If Heaven were not supported, it would fall and if the Earth were not held up it would sink. Might not the reason that Heaven doesn’t fall and the Earth doesn’t sink be that something is supporting and holding them up? And what of the affairs of humankind? Humankind is also controlled by a certain force, just as the drums of thunder sound after being struck. Anything that cannot push itself on is pushed on by a certain force. What is this force that seems to exist? Maybe it is such a thing as this: Invisible to the eye, imperceptible to the ear, it fills the under Heaven without it feeling full. Collected in the expressions of humankind, expressed in their complexions. However, exploring its movements we cannot understand its time. It is broad as the Earth, and round as Heaven, but we seek in vain for a route to find it. Therefore, the mouth can make noise, the

ears can hear sounds, the eyes can see, the hands can point, the feet can walk and things have a belonging.

The first part of the above passage states that the reason that Heaven and Earth do not fall and sink must be due to their having something holding them up. The affairs of humankind operate on like principles; there must be something that gives them order and keeps them going. Although this reasoning is not framed as a question, the questions that it touches upon are essentially the same as those raised in the first three sections of the *Fanwu Liuxing*.

The latter part of the passage says that whatever is giving order to the processes, one might describe in the following way: invisible, inaudible and omnipresent but never cloying. It appears in our expressions and on our faces. It is imperceptible and intangible in terms of time or space. However, it imbues each of our senses with their ability to sense, and all things with their proper place. Although this part has little in common with the phraseology of the *Fanwu Liuxing*, and makes no mention of the Dao, the idea it expresses is very like that in the latter six sections of the *Fanwu Liuxing*. In the same fashion, it offers answers to the questions raised previously, by claiming that the Dao is responsible for all these things.

Then we might say that this whole passage is like an abridged version of the *Fanwu Liuxing* and that the four chapters of the *Guanzi* contain the literary and theoretical structures needed for the *Fanwu Liuxing*, albeit in slightly different forms, so that one can take from the *Guanzi* important and basic resources for understanding the *Fanwu Liuxing*.

To summarize, such a high degree of similarity is not a coincidence. We can say with some certainty that the contents of the *Fanwu Liuxing*'s Sects. 4–9 come from the author that composed the *Guanzi*: "Neiye," or from someone or a group close to them. The ideas and use of language stem from the *Guanzi*, and not the other way around. We can say this because the literary structure of the *Fanwu Liuxing* confirms that it draws its resources from another source. Several scholars, including this author amongst them, have offered proofs that the ideas and phraseology that appear in the *Fanwu Liuxing* may be related to texts such as the *Zhuangzi* , the *He Guanzi*, the *Huainanzi*, the *Wenzi* , the "Chengfa" (成法) and "Mingxing" (名刑) chapters of the Mawangdui silk manuscript text *Shiliu Jing* (十六經) and Mawangdui silk manuscript *Daoyuan* (道原).[32] However, something we can be sure of is that the closest parallel to the *Fanwu Liuxing* may be found in the four chapters of the *Guanzi*. Whilst the influence of the *Laozi* is present, it is possible that it came to the *Fanwu Liuxing* via the channel of the *Guanzi*, as an indirect rather than

a direct source of influence on the *Fanwu Liuxing*.

Of course, the *Fanwu Liuxing* draws upon a variety of sources of knowledge, such as theories about Yin, Yang and the five phases. There are also areas of thought for which we are yet to identify a possible source, for example the following passages:

Slip 6:

> I have heard it said that: Only through extreme quiet can one understand wisdom, they who grasp wisdom can understand deities, they who grasp deities understand Tong (同) understand 僬 (character unknown), they who grasp 僬 understand 困 (character unknown), they who grasp persistence understand return.

Slip 7:

> One gives birth to Two, Two gives birth to Three, Three gives birth to Four, After Four comes a conclusion.[33]

We are yet to find evidence of the source for these passages.

4 Some Last Observations

At this point I would like to address one final question as to who was the author of the *Fanwu Liuxing*. As this chapter has already discussed, the *Fanwu Liuxing* has a loose structure; its author collected fragments together based on a certain need. The ideas contained within the text are not original, but most likely come from a scholarly tradition connected to the four chapters of the *Guanzi*. We feel that the *Fanwu Liuxing* was intended to be a general reader aimed at those in the ruling classes or average intellectuals who wished to become Sage Persons. The author made full use of the quotations of figures or classical texts from history to highlight profound philosophical thoughts, making their content accessible and clear. The author also used poetic devices to make his lines trip off the tongue, enabling recitation. To heighten the intensity of its popularity, the first three chapters adopt a startling style that achieves something of the literary effect of Qu Yuan's "Questions to Heaven." The more exaggerated and imaginative the questions raised in the former chapters, the more impressive the scale of Dao appears, the more profound and grand. Therefore, we can say that the first three sections of the *Fanwu Liuxing* are not the real questions at the heart of the *Fanwu Liuxing*, but an introduction intended to draw the reader in to consider the more important topics in the following sections.

Unlike the four chapters of the *Guanzi*, the *Fanwu Liuxing* is not intended to be a specialized interpretation of a classic text; it does not frequently employ philosophical concepts, have a fine form or logical

structure, or engage in lengthy or complex discussions. The *Fanwu Liuxing* does not refer to the terms *qi*-energy or "emptiness" (*xu* 虛), not necessarily because the author is unaware of these terms, but rather because a general reader does not require them. Therefore, in terms of its philosophical content, the *Fanwu Liuxing* cannot compare with texts such as the four chapters of the *Guanzi* or the "Tianyun" chapter in the *Zhuangzi* . Amongst other excavated texts it cannot compare with texts such as *Hengxian*, or the *Daoyuan* either. The *Fanwu Liuxing*, like the Mawangdui silk-manuscript "All Things Have Forms" diagram (*wu ze you xing* 物則有形)[34] and the "Chengxiang" (成相) and "Fu" (賦) chapters of the *Xunzi*, adopts accessible methods that are pleasing to the average reader to express profound philosophical principles.

We feel that the *Fanwu Liuxing* is essentially a Huang-Lao work. Although we do not have space to expound on that conclusion here in detail, we will make a brief comment. Huang-Lao is a tradition focused on utilitarian principles, dedicated to making practical political use of all kinds of thought, but primarily focused on Daoist ideas. In many Daoist texts , the term Dao is often described as something that is beyond sensory perception; as the *Laozi* puts it, "above is not bright, below is not dark" (Chap. 14); "the thing called Dao, it cannot be tasted with the mouth, cannot be seen with eyes, cannot be heard with ears" (Chap. 35); "you go to welcome it and cannot see its head, follow it but cannot find its tail" (Chap. 14); "Shape without shape, form without thing" (Chap. 14); or as the same idea appears in the *Guanzi*, "Dao, the mouth can not speak of it, the eyes cannot see it, the ears cannot hear it." The *Fanwu Liuxing* does not take on the same emphasis, saying instead that, "One, once chewed it has taste, the drummed has sound, once close it can be seen, grasp what you can grasp, hold on to it and you will lose it, it will wither like a dried up tree, what is stolen will be extinguished," placing its own emphasis upon the idea that "tho one who grasps the Dao … foremost his knowledge extends to knowledge of the four seas, his hearing extends to a thousand li, his eyesight extends to a hundred li … a country's danger or safety, existence or perishing, the actions of the their, can be known first." This comes rather closer to the idea of "not going out the door but knowing the world, not looking out the window but knowing the Dao of heaven" and "knows without going, names without seeing, accomplishes without acting" (Chap. 47) in the *Laozi*, or "the inclusive Dao … the myriad beings are generated by it, the myriad beings are accomplished by it" from the *Guanzi*. These focus on the later aspects of the Dao, as a source of potential benefits. There is a greater emphasis on the practical aspects of ruling rather than on internal cultivation. This is surely to appeal to the political

needs of the ruler; therefore, the *Fanwu Liuxing* demonstrates a strong political motive, its selling points being that it enables the ruler to lose nothing, to know all under Heaven, to govern the state, unite all under Heaven as one and take it and govern it for your own.

Footnotes

1

For the image of the text and interpretations see Ma Chengyuan ed. *Shanghai Museum Collection of Warring States Chu Bamboo Manuscripts*, vol. 7 . Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Book Press, 2008, pp. 221–300.

2

The four chapters we refer to here are "Neiye" 内業, "Xinshu Shangi" 心術上, "Xinshu Xia" 心術下 and "Baixin" 白心. The references to the *Guanzi* are made from Chen Guying , *A Full Interpretation of the Four Chapters of the Guanzi*. Beijing: Shangwu Yinshu Press, 2006.

3

Regarding the rhyming of the *Fanwu Liuxing*, see Chen Zhixiang, *Reading the Rhyme of the Fanwu Liuxing*, Fudan University Unearthed Manuscripts official website (hereafter referred to as the Fudan University official website) http://www.gwz.fudan.edu.cn, January 10, 2009. Also see the below useful references: Gu Shikao, "Slip Order and Mending the Rhymes of the Fanwu Liuxing Appearing in the Seventh Volume of the Shanghai Museum Collection," posted in http://www.bsm.org.cn , February 23, 2009. Although we can affirm that the rhymes exist, due to the manifold possibilities of slip organization order, there is yet a unified rhyming version.

4

Wu Kejing 鄔可晶 transcribed the *Fanwu Liuxing Re-Edited Transliteration* first posted on Fudan University's official website (http://www.gwz.fudan.edu.cn), December 31, 2008.

5

Compiler Cao Jinyan feels that all the sections ought to begin with the alternate reading, "It is asked that" (*wen zhi yue* 问之曰), a perspective based on his reading that the text is composed of a series of questions. On this point, see also Ma Chengyuan ed., *The Shanghai Museum Collection of Warring States Chu Bamboo Manuscripts* vol. 7, p. 221 . The New Interpretation also reads the second *wen* 闻 as *wen* 问, to read "It is asked that…". Li Rui's I"nterpretive Notes on the Fanwu Liuxing" (posted on Confucius 2000 Net December 31, 2000) reads all sections as beginning with the phrase "I have heard it said that …" without offering his reasons for interpreting the original in this way. For the purposes of this chapter, we adopt the same position, i.e. that all sections begin with the same phrase; as we will explore further on in the chapter, the content of the *Fanwu Liuxing* text is not an original creation, but rather quotes from previous persons or texts . In this case, even if we accept the appearance of the character *wen* 问, as valid, it should also be seen as a reference

to a question of a precious person or text, so that is, in fact, still a case of the author "having heard it said that".

6

Regarding the character "處" (translated here as coexist), the *Revised Edition and Interpretation* reads "序" (sequence), while later the author Qian Kejing maintains that the correct interpretation follows the organizer's original interpretation as "處". See Qian Kejing, "Supplementing Interpretations of the Fanwu Liuxing in the Shanghai Museum Collection Vol. 7," Fudan University official website, April 11, 2009.

7

Following "they do not perceive the true state of what is around them to right and left" the organizer's version as well as the *Revised Edition and Interpretations* all add a question mark; we maintain that according to the overall meaning of the text it should be a period. See Cao Feng , "'The True State of What is Around Them to Right and Left' in the Fanwu Liuxing." Appears in http://www.bsm.org.cn, January 4, 2009. For the rendering of "Scholar-Knights of the Nine Continents create plans, who can mark boundaries for them," we sum up the works of a few scholars: He Youzu 何有祖, "Readers' Notes to the Fanwu Liuxing" (appeared in http://www.bsm.org.cn, January 1, 2009); Fan Guodong凡國棟, "Explaining the "Scholar-Knights of the Nine Continents Create Plans" in the Fanwu Liuxing of the Shanghai Museum Collection Vol. 7 Slip 4" (see http://www.bsm.org.cn, January 3, 2009); Fan Changxi范常喜, "A Short Note on the Fanwu Liuxing of the Shanghai Museum Collection Vol. 7" (http://www.bsm.org.cn January 3, 2009) as well as the ideas of other scholars.

8

For this section we use the transliteration from Appendix 6 in the Literary Collection of the Shanghai Museum Collection of Warring States Chu Bamboo Manuscripts 1–5, composed by Li Shougui李守奎, Qu Bing曲冰 and Sun Weilong孫偉龍, 2007, pp. 791–794.

9

The contents of the third section following "I have heard it said" can be separated into two sections; the first section explains how the rationale of doing great things should follow from the rationale of dealing with small matters, and this is not a question phrase. Version A has a clear punctuation mark after "必從寸始" ("that must surely begin with one small step") which express a distinct context. As for version B, due to destruction of the manuscript we have no way of confirming this issue. The second section inquires into the mechanism of each natural phenomenon; for the reading of "What should one attend to in the case of the Ri'er of the Sun [a special cosmological phenomenon]? Who should one visit a punitive mission upon in the event of Yueyun of the Moon [another special cosmological phenomenon]? When the waters flow East, what should be filled? At sunrise, why does the sun appear large and yet its light does not hurt the eyes? Why at midday can a small goose obscure the sun? Who is higher than Heaven? Who reaches further than the Earth?" we follow the organizer Cao Jinyan, whilst for the reading of "Who made the Deity of Thunder? Who created Di (The Heavenly Emperor)?" we follow Chen Wei in his "Notes to the Fanwu Liuxing," published at http://www.bsm.org.cn on January 2, 2009. As for the unknown character, transcriber Cao Jinyan reads it as the "漆" character (see *Revised*

Edition and Interpretation) and thus makes it an unreadable solution; Zhang Chongli 張崇禮 in his "New Interpretation of the Fanwu Liuxing" (http://www.gwz.fudan.edu.cn, March 20, 2009) reads the last two phrases as "夫雨之至, 孰唾津之?夫風之至, 孰噓吸而迸之?," but this interpretation has no basis.

10

The character for "grasp"(執) that appears in the combination "grasping the Dao" is seen a lot in the *Fanwu Liuxing*; the compiler reads this character as "識" "to know", and other scholars either read it as "察" (observe) "守" (adjoin) or "得" (obtain). Yang Zesheng's 楊澤生 "Discussing the Fanwu Liuxing from the Two Characters Related to '少'" (http://www.bsm.org.cn March 7, 2009) has a discussion on this character and maintains it should be "執" (grasp), and we agree with this rendering; regarding the reading of "端冕" we follow Li Rui, "A New Interpretation of the Fanwu Liuxing (Manuscript)," http://www.confucius2000.com, December 31, 2008; regarding slips 14 and 16, we follow Gu Shikao 顧史考, "Slip Order and Mending the Rhymes of the Fanwu Liuxing Appearing in the Seventh Volume of the Shanghai Museum Collection" (ibid.), and Wang Zhongjiang , "New Views on Compiling the Fanwu Liuxing" (http://www.bsm.org.cn, March 3, 2009). We support this kind of organization; see Cao Feng , "Verifying the Two Methods of Organization of the Fanwu Liuxing," *Hunan Province Museum Periodical* 6 (March 2010). We read "箸" as "宁."

11

The *Revised Edition and Interpretations* read "few" (少) as "small" (小), and read "clear" (白) as "泊," and we agree that this is the correct reading. See Cao Feng , "Annotations to the "Sin bu sheng xin" Section of the Fanwu Liuxing," in Zhang Xiancheng ed. *Research on Language and Writing in Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts* , vol. 4, Bashu Press, May 2010. According to the *Revised Edition and Interpretations* the two "乎" characters are read as the beginning of the next phrase, it signifies "I" (吾), however we follow Li Rui's reading as "乎." See Li Rui, "Interpretive Notes on the Fanwu Liuxing" (cited above). As for "訞成," Yang Zesheng reads as "崇成" in his "Discussing the Fanwu Liuxing from the Two 'shao' Characters" (cited above). We similarly analyze the structure of the character "訞", and maintain that it could be read as "眇成" or "妙成," see Cao Feng, *Annotations to the "xin bu sheng xin" Section of the Fanwu Liuxing*.

12

The "女" character is read as "四" (four) in Shen Pei's "A New View of the Character for "One" in vol. 7 of the Shanghai Museum Collection," published on the Fudan University official website (http://www.gwz.fudan.edu.cn, December 31, 2008); However, Shen Pei does not state clearly in this paper how exactly this character can be read as "四". After Qin Hualin 秦樺林 published his "Annotations to the Twenty-First Slip of the Fanwu Liuxing" on the Fudan University official website on January 9, 2009 (http://www.gwz.fudan.edu.cn), Shen Pei (web name of "水土" *Shuitu*) then gave an explanation according to this form, refer to: the connection between slip 21, 13A and 12B, as well as the addition of the "目" *mu* character supplemented between "無" *wu* and "而知名" *er zhi ming*, the earliest proposal to this supplement was offered by Li Rui, see Li Rui, "A New Interpretation of the Fanwu Liuxing (Manuscript)" (cited above), we have previously supported this organization, see Cao Feng , "Discussing the Compilation of the Fanwu Liuxing Through the "不見而名"(bu jian er ming) in the Laozi" (appears in http://

www.bsm.org.cn, March 9, 2009), and Cao Feng, *Fanwu Liuxing Liangchu Bianlian de Wenxian Yanzheng* (cited above); the rendering of "遠之步天, 邇之施人" follows Song Huaqiang 宋華強, "An Explanation of 遠之步天 in the Fanwu Liuxing," in http://www.bsm.org.cn, June 28, 2009.

13

For how to read "俯" and "察", see Xiaoya's (小疋) response to the *Revised Edition and Interpretations*; as for reading "握" see Xiaoya's (小疋) response to Sun Feiyan 孫飛燕, *Readers Notes to the Fanwu Liuxing*; for the rendering of the "稽" character, see the compiler Cao Jinyan; as for the reading of the character when it follows the phrase "毋遠求度", see Qin Hualin's reply to the *Revised Edition*. For the reading of "maintaining the one" (守一*Shouyi*), we follow Wu Kejing's "Supplementing Interpretations of the Fanwu Liuxing in the Shanghai Museum Collection vol. 7" (cited above). The phrase "執此言" appears twice in the *Fanwu Liuxing*, and the *Revised Edition* renders it as "執此, 言…"; this is inappropriate due to the responding phrase following the "speech" (言) character in slip 20 and slip 25.

14

The *Fanwu Liuxing* also has a slip 27, but this slip is not connected to the other *Fanwu Liuxing* slips; this has already become a consensus in academic circles.

15

Ma Chengyuan ed., *Shanghai Museum Collection of Warring States Bamboo Manuscripts*, vol. 7, p. 221 .

16

See Guo Moruo, "An Inspection into the Posthumous works of Songxing and Yinwen," in *The Entire Collection of Guo Moruo's Works* vol. 1. Beijing: Renmin Press, 1982, pp. 553–557; Chen Guying also supports this view; see *A Complete Interpretation of the Four Chapters of the Guanzi*, pp. 169–170.

17

We find it necessary to explain here that although the compiler Cao Jinyan divides the *Fanwu Liuxing* into nine chapters, since the organization of the chapters is different, the contents differ widely from the nine chapters we discuss here.

18

Ma Chengyuan ed., *Shanghai Museum Collection of Warring States Bamboo Manuscripts*, vol. 7, p. 221 .

19

See Asano Youichi, "A New Interpretation of the Structure of the Fanwu Liuxing," http://

www.bsm.org.cn , February 2, 2009. The text that appears online in Chinese is only an abstract; for more details see: Asano Youchi, “The Entire Configuration of the Fanwu Liuxing in the Shanghai Museum Bamboo Collection,” *China Research* 48 (June 2009).

20

Cao Feng , published online at *Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts Net* 9 March, 2009. See also *The Hermeneutics of Excavated and Transmitted Texts* , compiled by the Fudan University Excavated Texts and Ancient Graphs Research Centre and published by Shanghai Guji Press in October 2010.

21

Wang Niansun 王念孫, *Readers Magazine* , vol. I. Beijing: China Bookstore, 1985. In this book, he maintains that “soft and hard” should be read in the reverse order to rhyme with the text , see p. 55.

22

Ibid. p. 56.

23

See Cao Feng , “*‘The True State of What is Around Them to Right and Left’ in the Fanwu Liuxing*” (cited above).

24

Regarding the two characters for “不聞” (translated above as “unaware”/“ignorant”), there are versions that lack these characters; for further details see Huang Huaixin 黃懷信, Zhang Maorong 張懋鎔 and Tian Xudong 田旭東, *Concentrated Notes to the Yizhoushu* Book II, Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Book Press, 1995, p. 1049.

25

The earliest appearance of this material was in Wu Kejing’s response to his *Revised Edition*.

26

Chen Huiling 陳惠玲 was the first to supply these two items: see Chen Huiling, “An Examination of the Supplemented Explanation to The True State of What is Around Them to Right and Left of Slip No. 3 of the Fanwu Liuxing,” Fudan University Official Website, April 22, 2009.

27

Sima Qian maintained that the text was written by Qu Yuan 屈原 (340–278 bce); however, Tan Jiefu 譚介甫 and other scholars pointed out early on that the text does not have a

single appearance of the character "兮" which marks it as completely different from the *Twenty-Five Chapters of Qu* (屈賦), and therefore it is not possible that it is the work of Qu. Rather, "at the time that King Qi Xuan passed on his rule to his son King Qi Hun, the Jixia Academy scholars had already jointly discussed this issue. Since Qu Yuan at that time went to the state of Qi quite a few times it is possible that he participated in these discussions, at the end there are a few items that discuss the affairs of the state of Chu, it might have been raised by Qu Yuan himself." See Tan Jiefu, *New Edition of Qu Yuan's Poetic Essays*, vol. II. Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1978, p. 406. Therefore, it is possible that Qu Yuan discussed related subject matters which were assembled and then placed in the historical records of the state of Chu as well as the personal laments, and was integrated into one piece of work of literature. On the other hand, the excavation of the *Fanwu Liuxing* contributed to the research into the *Ten Questions*; thus, this issue was raised and discussed again.

28

The phrase following this one is, "Hui Shi made no attempt to evade the questions, and answered him without any exercise of thought." One can note that the focus on this issue has also been attempted an answer by the School of Names .

29

Asano Youichi, *A New Interpretation of the Structure of the Fanwu Liuxing* (cited above) discusses the connection between the "Inquiring into Things" chapter of the of the *Fanwu Liuxing* and the Miao minority epic poem of *Genesis*, and maintains that this chapter offers a synthesis of the situations described by the Miao minority's *Genesis* and the *Heavenly Questions* .

30

For the annotations to "*shao che* (少徹)", "knowing the pure (知白)" and "miraculous formation (訾成)", see Cao Feng , *Annotations to the "Xin bu sheng xin" Section of the Fanwu Liuxing* (cited above).

31

Regarding these two items we follow Li Rui: *A New Interpretation of the Fanwu Liuxing* (manuscript) (cited above).

32

See Li Rui, *A New Interpretation of the Fanwu Liuxing* (Manuscript) (aforementioned); Wu Kejing, "Discussion on the Organization and Connection Between Version A and B of the Fanwu Liuxing in the Shanghai Museum Collection vol. 7," first published on the Fudan University Website: http://www.gwz.fudan.edu.cn on January 7, 2009; (aforementioned); Cao Feng , "'The True State of What is Around Them to Right and Left' in the Fanwu Liuxing" (aforementioned).

33

We maintain that there is a difference between “One gives birth to Two, Two gives birth to Three, Three gives birth to Four, After Four comes a conclusion” and *Laozi* Chap. 42, “Dao generates the one, one generates two, two generates three, three generates the myriad beings”; this difference may be related to Yin-Yang and the five phases. For further discussion see Cao Feng , “Explanation of ‘After Four Comes a Conclusion’ in the Shanghai Chu Bamboo Slips of the Fanwu Liuxing,” ta http://www.bsm.org.cn , August 21, 2009.

34

See Cao Feng , “Examination of the Mawangdui Silk Manuscript of the ‘All Things Have Forms’ Diagram,” which appears in *Chu Excavated Texts and Research on Pre-Qin Thought*. Taipei: Taiwan Shufang Press Ltd., 2010.

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5. From Auto-Creation to Autonomy: An Analysis of Political Philosophy in the *Hengxian*

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1 Introduction

Although in the *Hengxian*, in terms of preservation, we have a relatively complete and undamaged manuscript on bamboo slips, the meaning of the text remains obscure and in several instances resistant to our efforts to provide satisfactory interpretations to it. The idea "that *qi*-energy is self-generated " is an example of this phenomenon. The passage in which this idea appears is as follows:

> In the primordial state of Constancy, there is no existence. There is simplicity, stillness, and emptiness. Simplicity is great simplicity. Stillness is great stillness. Emptiness is great emptiness. It fulfills itself without repressing itself. Uncertain things arise. Once there are uncertain things, there is *qi*, once there is *qi*, there is existence; once there is existence, there is a beginning; there is the passage of time. There is not yet Heaven and Earth; there is not yet arising, progression, emergence, or engendering. Empty, still and as though one. Muddled and murky! All is still and homogeneous. There is not yet light, not yet teeming life. *Qi* is self-generating; Constancy categorically does not engender *qi. Qi* is self-generating and self-arising. The engendering of constant *qi* does not happen in isolation; there is something that takes part

[in the process]. Uncertain things and Constancy are present. The same can be said of the process during which uncertain things are engendered.

恆先無有, 樸、靜、虛。樸, 大樸。靜, 大靜。虛, 大虛。自厭不自忍, 或作。有或焉有氣, 有氣焉有有, 有有焉有始, 有始焉有往者。未有天地, 未(第一號簡)有作、行、出、生。虛靜爲一, 若寂寂夢夢, 靜同而未或明, 未或滋生。氣是自生, 恆莫生氣, 氣是自生、自作。恆氣之(第二號簡)生, 不獨有與也.[1]

We offer the following annotated or extrapolated translation to make our interpretation of this passage clear.

Nothing exists prior to Constancy (Heng 恒) and the Primordial (xian 先); they exist in a state of simplicity, quiet, emptiness. These are not the common states of such, but the ultimate states. The result of the*Dao* being self-sufficient but not self-repressed is that some uncertain things are created. Once these are created we have *qi*, following *qi* there comes in order, the existence of certain things, beginnings (the beginnings of time), and going out (movement back and forth across time). In the state of "Primordial Constancy there is no existence" (恒先無有); Heaven and Earth are yet to appear, and there are no acts, actions, forthcomings or generations (yet). Empty, nonexistent, quiet and blended together, in a state of quiet togetherness, to a certain extent, night and day and the myriad objects are yet to exist in any sense. However, *qi* is self-generated , Constancy (does not, with motive or consciousness of doing so) generate *qi*, *qi* is in fact self-generated, and self-arising. The constant *qi* in its generation of the myriad things, is unlike Dao, *huo* 或, the uncertain, undefined things are eternal ultimate, the creation derived from *huo* 或 and from *qi* is the same.

The difficulty that is presented in the idea of "*qi*-energy is self-generated " is that if we treat the first section of *Hengxian* as an ontological exploration, that places Dao (represented by the prior ultimate nonexistence) at the origin of a series of creation, at the very font of creation, after which uncertain things (*huo* 或) and *qi* emerge as two (inimitable) essential elements in the creation of existence (*you* 有). Only after the emergence of existence do we have time and movement in time. Up until this point we are yet to hit upon any great semantic difficulties. Closely following this is a shift in emphasis, to state that *qi* is self-born, that Constancy does not give birth to *qi*, and the author of the text draws a clear line between Constancy and *qi* in terms of creation. It seems as if the author cannot make this point clearly enough, coming back to the same point again, saying that *qi* is self-generated and self-arising. Not only is *qi* thus, but *huo* and *qi* are similar in that they are not generated of Constancy, but are self-

generated and self-arising.[2] Why the author would make statements that do not seem to adhere to common sense is a point that baffles us to this day.

2 Past Research

Researcher Li Ling offers only a simple explanation for the "self-generated *qi*," saying, "the meaning of this sentence is that Dao does not directly generate *qi*"; he does not, however, delve into the issues raised by the statement, "*qi* is self-engendering, self-arising" (氣是自生、自作). We find that the translations and papers produced discussing the *Hengxian* to the present have yet to address the issue of "self-generated *qi*", either avoiding the topic completely, or passing over it with minimal discussion.[3]

However, other scholars have realized that "self-generated *qi*" is an important aspect of the *Hengxian* and have attempted to offer some explanation for it. For example, Wu Genyou 吴根友 in his paper "An Analysis of Philosophical Thought in Shanghai Museum Chu Bamboo Manuscript Hengxian":

> What is highly surprising is that the author of *Hengxian* on the one hand states that *qi* is generated from *huo*, but within the same breath states that *qi* is self-generated, that "Constancy does not engender *qi*, that *qi* is self-arising and self-generated," what is it that these seemingly self-contradictory statements seek to express? We can offer two possible interpretations, the first being that where the author states that "Constancy does not engender *qi*" they mean that Primordial Constancy does not directly generate *qi*; or perhaps, although the author states that *huo* produces *qi*, it is unknown how *qi* generates the myriad beings. That would be what we would nowadays call a scientific question requiring empirical proofs, therefore the author can only relegate the answer to the self-generating nature of *qi*. From the perspective of the second interpretation, the author seems to experience some dislocation between his idea of philosophical cosmology and a scientific cosmological generation. It is also possible, of course, that our reorganizing of the bamboo manuscript is flawed, or that we are suffering from lost or misarranged slips, that in missing some initial clarification we find the remaining text to be somewhat self-contradictory."[4]

Wu Genyou's first interpretation does not attempt to explain why Primordial Constancy does not generate *qi*. His second interpretation seems to explain away the contradictory elements by claiming limitations to the author's cosmological speculation and knowledge,

therefore "that *qi* is self-engendered, self-arising" is a forced conclusion, or might be due to lost or missed passages. All in all, he seems to accept that the "self-generated " claims of *qi* in the *Hengxian* are without rationale.

Guo Qiyong 郭齊勇, in "Hengxian—The Lost Treatise on Forms and Names in Daoist-Legalist Thought," states that, "*qi* is born of itself and operates of itself, and that is the key message of the treatise." He reads (derives) the meaning space (*yu* 域) from the graph *huo* (或), and believes that concepts such as Primordial Constancy (*Heng Xian* 恒先) Constancy (*heng* 恒) Dao (道) space (yu 域) constant *qi* (*hengqi* 恒氣) and *qi* (氣) are essentially equal and interchangeable terms.[5]

Constancy and Primordial Constancy (being completely self-sufficient, quiet and motionless) are the substance of Dao (*daozhiti* 道之體) and the stillness of Dao (*daozhijing* 道之靜), space, constant *qi* and *yuanqi* (元氣)(self-generated self-active) are the movements and actions of Dao. Therefore, *huo* (or space *yu*) and *qi* are different names of Dao; they are "constantly present, and thus can be named constant"; they are different manifestations of different functions of Dao, solely different aspects. Precisely because *huo* and *qi* are all Dao, they are all "self-generated , there is nothing outside that generates them." Therefore we cannot say that Dao is produced by Constancy or transforms space and *qi* into being. Since *huo* (space) and *qi* are all Dao, when Dao generates *qi* it is self-generation and not an outer entity that generates it. The explanation provided, i.e., the substance, stillness, action and movement of Dao, has its logical aspect, but it cannot fully come to explain why the author of the *Hengxian* insists on emphasizing through repetition that *qi* is self-generated and self-arising. Furthermore, to conclude that *huo* (*yu* space) and *qi* are indeed different names for Dao deserves further treatment and proof.

Ding Sixin 丁四新 in the second section of his "Interpretations of Chu State Bamboo Manuscript Hengxian," in notes four and five respectively, discusses the phrases, "*qi* is generated" and "*qi* is generated and self-arising." However, he treats them as very different statements; regarding the former, he points out that, "'*qi*' is engendered and arising of itself, which means that during such processes it is self-affirming and self-structuring, rather than relying on being generated or transmuted by another." As to the former phrase, he states that, "this phrase places constant *qi* as the root of the myriad objects, whilst the production of the myriad objects is decided and generated by *qi*."[6] Placing *qi* as the root source of the production of the myriad objects is a conclusion worth considering; however, he does not present sufficient evidence or argumentation for his viewpoint, and artificially separates the two phrases under discussion, which not only serves to throw up obstacles to interpretation but

moreover complicates the issue unnecessarily.

Liu Yiqun 劉貽群, in his essay "Suggested Reading of Self-Generation in the Hengxian," engages in specific discussion of the idea of self-generation; he believes that "like the *Great One Generates Water* (*Taiyishengshui* 太一生水), the *Hengxian* is a lengthy treatise on cosmology". He identifies five different types of generation in the *Hengxian*, which are: self-generation (*zi sheng* 自生), return (*fu* 复), generation (*sheng* 生), occurrence (*yan you* 焉有) and emergence from (*chu yu* 出於). He comments, "not only is *qi* self-generated , but from the point of view of *qi*, all other things are self-generated, hence there is the statement 'that which generates *yu* is the same (i.e. *yu* generates *yu*)' and 'others generate others, spirits generate spirits, *wei* generates *wei*, tragedy, tragedy and mourning, mourning.' Although we are currently unable to offer a satisfactory explanation for this passage, we can be certain that it carries the same meaning: self-generation. … As the process of self-birth continues, eventually the phenomenon of return comes about, as if to say that generation continues onwards but in fact returns to itself, to form a simple act of repetition."[7]

The point in Liu Yiqun's comments that captures our attention is that he not only believes that "*qi* is self-generated" but that "all things" are also "self-generated ," his emphasis is not only on the relationship between Primordial Constancy and *qi*, but on their relation to all things. This is an inspiring point; however, he does not manage to explain what is accomplished by the *Hengxian* stating that all things are self-generated, which ought to be the key point here.

There is a common fault amongst the essays we have discussed above. They all engage in speculation without offering sufficient quotations from the text or argumentation for the interpretation of quotations, so that their opinions remain unconvincing.[8] Li Rui's 李鋭 essay "'Qi is Self-Generated': The Utterly Unique Cosmological Theory of the Hengxian" makes some reparation for this point. Li Rui points out that the idea that "*qi* is self-generated" reflects a unique cosmological theory in the *Hengxian*, in much the same way that "existence is generated from nonexistence" does, which in turn is much the same as the numerological theory of the order of creation, which is much the same as combining these two together; the *Hengxian* places a special emphasis on the idea that "*qi* is self-generated ," saying: "the myriad objects do not originate from nothingness (*wu* 無)."

There is no parallel to a cosmology based upon self-generation until the Studies of the Obscure (*xuan xue* 玄學) in the Wei and Jin periods. In his *Chongyou* Treatise (*Chongyou Lun* 崇有論), Pei Wei 裴頠 takes the idea of existence being self-born, which is mentioned in the commentary works of Xiang Xiu 向秀 and Guo Xiang 郭象 on the

Zhuangzi , and pushes it to its limits. Some scholars believe that Guo Xiang's "self-generated and lone transformation" might have been influenced by Buddhist Prajña scripture; however now we see that that might not be the case after all. Even the ideas of later authors such as Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤, Zhang Zai 張載 and Zhu Xi 朱熹 may be traced back to the idea of *qi* as self-generated. Although the history of this idea is ambiguous and difficult to trace, it does not leave us entirely without clues. Li Rui points out that the *Wei Shu*, appended to the *Changes* (易緯 乾鑿度) says, "if existence originates from nonexistence, from whence do Heaven and Earth (*qian kun* 乾坤) originate?" Hence it is said:

> There is the Great Change (*tai yi* 太易), the Great Start (*tai chu* 太初), the Great Beginning (*tai shi* 太始), the Great Unmarked (*tai su* 太素). At the great change there is no *qi* to be seen, at the great start *qi* begins, at the great beginning forms begin, at the great unmarked substance begins.

Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 offers the following explanation for the description of, "at Tai Chu *qi* begins," saying: "'the root and beginning from whence original *qi* (*yuan qi* 元氣) comes. Tai Yi is alone without any objects, how is it possible for it to give birth to Tai Chu? Hence Tai Chu must suddenly be generated of itself.'" Zheng Xuan clearly states a case of "self-generation" that is the closest we can find to that stated in the *Hengxian*. Li Rui also points out that before Zheng Xuan's commentary we also see similar ideas in Wang Chong's 王充 *Lunheng* 論衡; for example in the "Wushi" chapter 物勢 there is the passage, "The *qi* of Heaven and Earth combine and humankind are born of themselves". The " Ziran" 自然 chapter also contains the phrase, "the *qi* of Heaven and Earth combine and the myriad objects are self-born."[9]

The crucial point of Li Rui's essay is that he offers concrete examples to explain the importance of the discovery of the *Hengxian* for the history of Chinese thought. Because of it, we can see that several important ideas from the Wei and Jin periods and later authors do not spring out of nothing, nor are they necessarily the result of external influences; they originate instead in writings from the Pre-Qin period. Neither is it true that there is a long break in the tradition of the idea of "self-generation" from then until the Wei and Jin periods, for we have the writings of Wang Chong and Zheng Xuan , which bridge the gap.

However, Li Rui's essay and the other essays we mention above all share a common fault, which is that they all restrict themselves to a narrow discussion of the phrase, "*qi* is self-generated , Constancy does not give birth to *qi*", "*qi* is self-born and self-arising," or their meaning

regarding a cosmological system; they never manage to address a broader perspective on the structure of ideas contained in the *Hengxian*. This is the basic reason that they are unable to offer an answer as to why the statement "*qi* is self-generated" does not imply an error in cosmological speculation; why it has a rational and justifiable place in the text ; why the idea of "self-generation and self-doing" is continually emphasized throughout the text; and why this is a critical part of the *Hengxian* that cannot be overlooked.

3 Self-generation from Pre-*Qi*n, Throughout *Qi*n to the Han Dynasties

Of the texts offered for comparison in Li Rui's essay, we feel that *Lunheng* 論衡 by Wang Chong 王充 is the most worth of attention. This text is a valuable resource for explaining the difficulties presented in the *Hengxian*. *Lunheng* offers a detailed discussion of the idea of "self-generation ," with varied examples. We will offer a few additional examples, for comparison with the context:

> A Confucian Scholar commented saying: "Heaven and Earth purposely create human beings." These words are preposterous. I believe that the *yangqi* 陽氣 discharged by Heaven and the *yinqi* 陰氣 discharged by Earth mutually copulate, and from this process human beings emerge [on their own], just as the energies of husband and wife mutually integrate and a child self emerges. The integration of energy between the husband and wife at the time is not done in intention to give birth to a child, but it is sexual impulse that drives them together, placed together, a child is created. Therefore, husband and wife do not consciously create a child, and from this we can know that Heaven and Earth cannot possibly consciously create human beings. In this manner, humans are generated between Heaven and Earth, just as fish are born in deep water, just as lice grow on the human body, they rely on energy and are born, it is the same category of things that mutually reproduce. The myriad things are generated between Heaven and Earth, it happens in this same way. (*Lunheng*: "Wushi" chapter)
>
> Someone posed a question: The human Dao has intention and thus they act, the Heavenly Dao has no intention so how does it act? Answered saying: the action of Heaven, autonomously disperses *qi*, dispersing *qi* allows the beings to be self-generated , it does not intentionally disperse the *qi* to generate the beings. Motionless, the *qi* is not dispersed, *qi* not dispersed, the things are not generated, this is how it differs from the human Dao.

(“Shuori” chapter)

Heaven cannot consciously generate the human being, when it creates the myriad beings, it cannot be consciously. The Yang energy dispersed by Heaven integrates with the Yin energy dispersed by Earth; the myriad things thus randomly emerge on their own. (“Wushi” chapter)

The movement and action of heaven is intended precisely to dissaminate *qi* energy, when movement occurs in the celestial body, *qi* is then disseminated, and the myriad beings only then come into existence. Just as humans move the essential *qi* energy, when movement occurs in the human body the essential *qi* energy then comes out, children are thus spontaneously engendered. The movement of the celestial body is not because it wishes to thereby create the myriad beings, however the myriad beings yet emerge on their own “spontaneously,” the celestial body bestows the *qi* energy, this is not because it wants to create the myriad beings, but after the myriad beings receive the *qi* energy they take form on their own, this is called “ nonaction” (*wuwei* 無為). What then do we call the self-contained nonaction of Heaven? It is the discharging of *qi* energy. *Qi* energy is peaceful and quiet, the matter of nonaction and no endeavors.

Heaven covers and it is above, Earth lies flat and is below, the *qi* of the Earth rises to Heaven, the *qi* of Heaven descends to Earth, the myriad beings are thus self-engendered between Heaven and Earth. When the myriad beings are engendered, Heaven does not need to again intervene in them, just as the embryo is nurtured in the mother’s stomach, the father cannot get involved. The myriad beings are autonomously generated, the embryo is self-so formed, there is no need for Heaven and Earth, mother and father to intervene! (“Ziran” chapter)

Someone asked: “Humans live between Heaven and Earth, the actions of Heaven and Earth are without consciousness, humans inherit the nature of Heaven, thus the actions of humans also ought to be unconscious, but humans nevertheless have consciousness when they proceed in action, what is the justification for this?” The response was as follows: “The person with morality of the highest value, and the utmost purity and honesty, inherits the most *qi* energy from Heaven, therefore he is able to follow the example of Heaven, and can thus reach the realm of being spontaneous with nonaction. The person who inherits weak and less *qi* energy from Heaven, does not comply with Dao and esteem virtue (de 德), and does not resemble Heaven, therefore he is called unworthy, that is, does not resemble Heaven, does not resemble the sage, therefore the

unworthy people can only engage consciously in activity. Heaven and Earth resemble a smelting furnace, the spontaneous changes resemble the smith. In receiving the *qi* energy of Heaven they differ, how then can all people be called sages? Among the sages, the most genuine are Huang and Lao. Huang refers to the Yellow Emperor and Lao refers to Laozi. The conduct of the Yellow Emperor and Laozi—their body and mind are peaceful without anything they pursue after, dignified and severe, the *qi* of Yin and Yang are naturally harmonized, they do not place their mind in conscious efforts and the myriad things naturally transform, they have no intention in the arising of the myriad beings, and the myriad beings are generated on their own." ("Ziran" chapter)

The heavenly Dao is without action; therefore, the emergence of spring is not because heaven intends the birth of the crops, the emergence of summer is not because Heaven intends for the crops to grow, the emergence of autumn is not because Heaven intends for the crops to ripen, and the emergence of winter is not because Heaven intends on the collection of the crops. The Yang energy naturally arises, crops then naturally begin to grow; the Yin energy naturally arises, the crops then naturally ripen and are collected. ("Ziran" chapter)

What must be pointed out here is that Wang Chong offers opposing arguments to the Confucian scholars of his time, particularly opposing the Confucian premise that Heaven deliberately generated humanity, which would suggest the position that both humans and all other things were consciously created by Heaven. Wang Chong presents a thorough rejection of this standpoint, stating that there is no intention in the creation of humans or objects; instead, they are rather suddenly self-generated . Therefore, "self-generation" is the main argument that Wang Chong uses to attack the position of the Confucian scholars. In the examples above, there are some phenomena that are worth our attention, as they are relevant to the *Hengxian*.

Firstly, in the statement, "we can discuss it after the Daoists," we see that in his opposition of the Confucians, Wang Chong has a clear prejudice, adopting Daoist ideas as his evidence. The clear Daoist nature of the *Hengxian* is beyond doubt as well.

Secondly, *qi* resides amongst Heaven, Earth and the myriad objects; the creation of the myriad objects are the result of the combination of Heaven and Earth "using" and "combining" *qi*.

Thirdly, the term "Heaven and Earth" in the *Lunheng* is the origin of the series of creation; its status is comparable with Constancy in the *Hengxian*. The creation of the myriad objects, despite their originating from Heaven and Earth, was neither conscious nor active. The

creation is coincidental, natural (of-itself) and self-generated. It is not the case that Heaven and Earth has nothing to do with the creation of things; rather that it does not consciously cause the creation. Hence the Way of Heaven (*tian dao* 天道) is said to be ("doing nothing") without action, whilst objects are self-generated and self-acting. Amongst humans, those closest to Dao who can perceive Heaven do nothing, whereas those who receive little of the *qi* of Heaven are unlike Heaven and do things.

Fourthly, Wang Chong describes the relationship between Heaven and Earth, *Qi* and all things, his aim in stating that humanity and things are self-born is not to describe the cosmological processes of creation, but in order to appeal to a certain idea of creation so as to present and illustrate a certain philosophy of politics, that of the typical Huang-Lao political philosophy; "no plans, no actions and all things are transformed of themselves, with no aim of creation in mind things come to be so of themselves" (無心於爲而物自化,無意於生而物自成).

And finally, linguistic expressions close or related to "self-generation" include "self-becoming" (*zi cheng* 自成), " self-transformation" (*zi hua* 自化), self-emergence (*zi chu* 自出), "self-arising" (*zi zuo* 自 作) amongst others.

The *Lunheng* provides us with a great deal of inspiration in researching the idea of "self-generation" because of the high degree of similarity between the structure of thought in the two texts . Despite the fact that, in terms of an ultimate origin, the *Lunheng* does not use terms such as Constancy (*Heng* 恒) or Primordial Constancy (*Hengxian* 恒先), preferring to appeal to the agents Heaven and Earth; we may attribute this to the fact that Wang Chong is presenting a rebuttal to the Heaven and Earth of the Confucian scholars. Heaven and Earth, Constancy and Primordial Constancy all represent the essential, basic or ultimate.[10] We summarize the various points of inspiration from the *Lunheng* as follows:

> "Heaven cannot intentionally generate human beings, although it generates the myriad beings, this generation cannot be intended" (天不能故生人, 則其生萬物, 亦不能故也); "the movement and action of Heaven, disperses *qi*, its movement causes the *qi* to emerge, beings are thus generated" (天之動行也, 施氣也, 體動氣乃出, 物乃生矣); and "the movements of Heaven do not desire to generate the beings, but the beings are self-generated , they are self-so " (天之動行也, 施氣也, 體動氣乃出, 物乃生矣。" "天動不欲以生物, 而物自生, 此則自然也).

These three quotes offer us possible interpretations of the phase, "Constancy does not engender *qi*" in the *Hengxian*. By reading the

Lunheng (if we apply the same reasoning as is found in the *Lunheng* to the *Hengxian*) we find that this phrase may mean that, as in the *Lunheng*, there is no direct act of creation between Constancy and *qi*, that the creation of *qi* and other things is not the result of deliberate and conscious creation from constancy. In that case, even though the stage described as uncertain things (*huo*) and the ultimate constancy precede *qi*, and *qi* is described as "self-generated ," the self-contradiction of the two can be effectively resolved.

The phrase "*qi* is self-generated" does not mean that it engenders itself, and it is not the case, as Liu Yiqun suggests, that "all things" generate themselves, but rather that definable existence, comprised of indefinable existence and *qi*, appears without motive, and naturally. To make this point clear, the author of the *Hengxian* deliberately adds the statement, "*qi* is self-generated and self-arising."

As mentioned above, Wang Chong employs a Daoist cosmology, but he does not do so to describe processes of creation in and of themselves or for their own sake; he does so to explicate his political philosophy. For example, in the quote, "the movements of Heaven do not desire to generate the beings, but the beings are self-generated , they are thus self-so . The dispersing of *qi* does not desire to act for the beings, but the beings self-act, they thus are in non-action," the ideas of things being generated of themselves and acting of themselves, are parallels. Heaven is so of itself, and so it does not act; things are self-generated and so they are active of themselves. The *Hengxian* takes a similar position, and we will be addressing in detail the close relationship between the cosmological speculation in the first half and the political philosophy in the second half of the *Hengxian* in the third section of this chapter, including how the idea of "self-generation" from the first section is emphasized to bring out the idea of "self-acting" in the second half.

Up until now, research into the idea of "self-generation" has tended universally towards placing this idea into a context of universal creation. To say that "self-generation" is not a kind of creation would be irrational. But to demand that it is only to be understood as a creative process is also without reason. The ideas of "self-generation" and "self-acting" are complementary, and only by stepping outside of the framework of universal creation can we allow the complementary side of self-action in political philosophy in; only in this way can we arrive at a genuine understanding of the self-generation of *qi*. To unravel this knot of mystery surrounding the idea of self-generation, the key is in asking not "how" but "why" such a process occurs.

If we accept that "self-born" means "not intentionally caused to be born," and further that "self-born" and "self-acting" are a

complementary pair that ought to be understood in the context of each other, and that there are several other means of expressing similar “self-so ” actions, then we are presented with a much broader picture. When searching for evidence within texts , we can expand our search to include other forms of “self-born”-type acts. Let us look first, for example, at the “Tianyun” 天運 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* :

> The ruler needs to be in non-action, only then he can govern all under Heaven, ministers need to have action to apply it for all under Heaven, this is the law of Heaven and the principle of Earth, the rule that we cannot change as we wish. Therefore, the one who governed all under Heaven in ancient times, even though his wisdom can win over Heaven and Earth, he also never personally goes to think it through; even if his speech talent can circulate all over between the myriad beings, he also never personally goes to give speeches; even if his talent can be preeminent throughout the land, yet he never personally goes to act. The high Heaven does not intentionally engender something yet the myriad beings are naturally engendered, the great Earth does not intentionally grow anything, yet the myriad beings naturally reproduce and grow, the ruler is in nonaction under Heaven, all under Heaven then can naturally obtain rule.

Here we would like to point out that the phrasing of “Heaven does not intentionally engender” (天不産) and “Earth does not intentionally grow” (地不長) is similar and comparable to “Constancy does not generate” in the *Hengxian*.

It is set up as a progression that it is precisely because Heaven and Earth do not produce and grow them that all things are transformed and nurtured, that is one might say, that all things are transformed and nurtured of themselves. It is precisely because of this nonaction of Heaven and Earth that the ruler, who reflects them, adopts a stance of “nonaction” or taking no action personally, so that taking actions or acting of themselves is left to the people of the kingdom. Now we will look at another example:

> Heaven is clear because of non-action, the earth is peaceful and still because of non-action, heaven and earth, both in non-action, combine in each other, the myriad things can all transform and grow. Confused and stupefied, I don’t know from where they arise! Indistinct, there is not a trace! The myriad beings are many and varied; all are produced from non-action. Therefore, it is said, heaven and earth unintentionally act, yet nothing is unborn and nothing is undone, yet humans, who is capable of non-action! (*Zhuangzi*: “Zhile” 至樂 chapter)

As in the *Lunheng*, this passage describes a process by which the combination (coming together) of Heaven and Earth occurs and all things are born. What we must be careful to note is that they come together without acting, and that all things are transformed on this basis of non-action; they are "engendered from non-action." Therefore, the process itself is not dissimilar to "*qi* is self-generated " and "Constancy does not generate *qi*." "[F]lurried and indistinct, I do not know where it is generated from, flurried and indistinct, it does not leave a trace" exactly describes a scene wherein Dao takes no conscious action whatsoever, whilst all various things are naturally born in and of themselves. Guo Xiang 郭象 provides the following comment on the phrase, "flurried and indistinct, I do not know where it is generated from," saying: "all come forth of themselves, not from any action," where "coming forth of themselves" is equal to being "generated of themselves," and we imagine that to "come forth … not from any action" is equal or comparable to "they are not generated." It is precisely because the coming together of Heaven and Earth may be described as non-action, that one can describe Heaven and earth as operating on the exalted level of doing nothing and yet leaving nothing undone.

Next we will look at a passage from the "Taizu" 泰族 chapter of the *Huainanzi* 淮南子:

> Heaven above installs the sun and the moon, displays the stars, regulates Yin and Yang, and arranges the four seasons. Daytime is illuminated by sunshine, the evening lets them rest, employs wind to blow-dry, uses rain and dew to moisturize. Heaven above transforms and raises the myriad beings, we do not see what nurtures them, however the myriad beings grow vigorously; Heaven above exterminates the myriad beings, we do not see what exterminates them, however the myriad beings wither and die. This type of invisible method of being born and dying, is called *shenming* (the numinous and the luminous). The sage imitates the natural world, therefore when he brings well-being to the people, his actions go unseen, yet happiness (the blessings) descends to the people; when he eliminates disasters for the people, we do not see what measures he takes, yet disasters are removed.
>
> Heaven reaches its highest degree, Earth reaches its thickest degree, the moon illuminates the night sky, the sun illuminates daytime, the star alignment is bright and shiny, Yin and Yang transform and engender. Human beings do not intentionally create these natural phenomena, rather they abide by a rule, spontaneously as such. Therefore, the transformation of Yin-Yang

and the four seasons, is not to raise and nurture the myriad beings; rain and dew descend in a timely manner, not to nurture the plants. The numinous and the luminous come into contact, Yin and Yang harmonize, the myriad beings arise spontaneously … Heaven and Earth and the four times, cannot directly produce the myriad beings, the numinous and the luminous come into contact, Yin and Yang harmonize, the myriad beings are only then enabled to come into being; the sage governs all under Heaven, he does not wish to force change on people's nature, but rather wishes to comply with the nature people already possess, to wash off the dirty parts among them, and to guide them towards transformation of their inner qualities in a good direction. Therefore, handling affairs by carrying on the rule, their result is remarkable; if humans attempt or make an effort to manipulate, not according to the rule, the results yielded are minute … The myriad beings all have their own natural rule, and only by following objective rule can people then engage in governance.

天致其高, 地致其厚, 月照其夜, 日照其晝, 〔列星朗〕, 陰陽化, 非有〔爲焉〕, 〔正其〕道而物自然。故陰陽四時, 非生萬物也。雨露時降, 非養草木也。神明接, 陰陽和, 而萬物生矣。……天地四時, 非生萬物也, 神明接, 陰陽和, 而萬物生之。聖人之治天下, 非易民性也, (柮)〔拊〕循其所有而滌蕩之。故因則大, (化)〔作〕則細矣。……夫物有以自然, 而後人事有治也.[11]

The method of linguistic expression of ideas such as, "one sees not the nurturing" (*mo jian qi suo yang* 莫見其所養), "one sees not the passing" (*mo jian qi suo sang* 莫見其所喪), "non-birth" (*fei sheng* 非生), "non-nurture" (*fei yang*非養), "non-change (*fei yi* 非易)" are comparable with the "non-birth" (*mo sheng* 莫生) in the *Hengxian*.

It is worth noting that at the beginning of the *Huainanzi*: " Taizu," we see statements such as "Heaven" that "generates all things", "that kills off all things"; whilst later in the same chapter, we see statements such as, "Heaven does not generate the myriad beings." What appears self-contradictory is in fact not so, for this is the *shenming* whose example the Sage Person is to follow, a course by which nothing is done and nothing is left undone. The aim is to reach the political target of "things have their self-so nature, and then the affairs of man are in order." The aim of the *Hengxian* is the same, which is a topic we will revisit in this chapter. For now, let us look next at the "Xiuwu" 修務 chapter of the *Huainanzi*:

In accordance with the topography of "West is high East is low", therefore, the running waters of the Yangtze and the Yellow Rivers all flow from the West into the great ocean in the East,

however, this must go through the process of human control which clears the way for the Yangtze and the Yellow Rivers, only then it is possible to enable the water to flow along the [correct] river course and pour eastwards; seedlings of farm crops grow and develop during springtime, however it is necessary for people to administer farm work, only then when autumn arrives we can have a bumper harvest of the five grains. If we let water naturally flow, and wait for the sprouts to naturally grow, then the contributions of Gun and Yu would not be established, the later wisdom of the minister of agriculture is then useless.

This expresses a similar idea to the statement that "things have their self-so nature, and then the affairs of man are in order" (*Huainanzi*: "Taizu"). If a person is able to "listen" to the self-flowing of the waters, and await the self-growing of humankind, that is, to "listen" to the self-so in every case, then there is no need for the great deeds of the legendary kings or the wisdom of the gods; even the active participation of the ruler becomes surplus to requirements. Next let us look at an example from the "Tianrui " 天瑞 chapter of the *Liezi* 列子:

There are things which are engendered by others, there are things which are not engendered by others, there things which are transformed by others, there are things which are not transformed by others. Things that are not engendered by others can generate the myriad beings, those not transformed by others can change the myriad beings. Things engendered by others have no choice but to emerge, things that are transformed by others have no choice but to change. Therefore, things are constantly engendered and are constantly changing. What is called constantly engendering, constantly changing is at the same time incessantly not producing, incessantly not changing. Yin-Yang , the four times, all follow this way. Those that are entities that are independent and everlasting, those who are not transformed by others, move in circular movement, and circulate back and forth. Circulating back and forth does not come to an end. Independent and everlasting, its Dao cannot be exhausted. The Book of the Yellow Emperor says: the wondrous function of emptiness, exists eternally, this is called the "mysterious female", the gate to the "mysterious female", is the origin of Heaven, Earth, and the myriad beings. It is continuous, unceasing and indistinct, both exhibits function and is never exhausted. Therefore, it engenders the myriad beings, and is not engendered by other things. It causes the myriad beings to transform; they are not transformed by other things. The myriad beings are all naturally engendered,

> naturally transform, their form and type appear naturally, and develop the ability of wisdom on their own. They naturally decline and naturally grow. If we say that the existence of what generates the myriad beings deliberately engenders and transforms, deliberately engenders and transforms, deliberately issues form and type, deliberately enables all myriad beings to have the ability of wisdom, and deliberately causes the myriad beings to decline and grow, then it is a mistake.

From the passage quoted here, we find that the verbs to "engender" and "transform" are equal and on the same level, and "self-born" and " self-transformative" can also be aligned with each other. "That which gives birth to things" and "that which transforms things" may be aligned with the Constancy in *Hengxian* and the role of Heaven and Earth in the *Lunheng*.

The subject of "self-generating, self-transformation, self-emergence of forms and categories, self-expression of wisdom and ability, and self-weakening and self-growth," is "the one who frequently generates and frequently transforms," which is equivalent to "*qi* is self-engendered and self-arising" in the *Hengxian*. "If we say that the existence that generates the myriad beings purposefully generates and transforms them, purposefully creates the forms and categories, purposefully displays wisdom and ability, and purposefully enables the myriad beings to grow or weaken, then this is a mistake," describes the total absence of conscious motive in the generation of beings and the transformation of beings, which is equivalent to the statement that Constancy does not engender *qi*.

The commentary to the *Liezi* attributed to Zhang Zhan 張湛 of the Western Jin period has been consistently labeled a suspect ancient text . However, most scholars agree that the sheer depth, systematic maturity and stylistic grace of the text are beyond the abilities of Zhang Zhan as its sole author, not to mention the correlative structure of the work. If we allow that there is sufficient evidence to say that Zhang Zhan did re-edit a version of the *Liezi*, it was not without reference to an earlier work as his basis or blueprint.[12]

We can look to the dialogue between Yunjiang 雲將 and Hong Meng 鴻蒙 for another example of connecting the ideas of " self-transformation" and "self-generation."

> Hong Meng said: "Cultivate your body and nurture your heart-mind. You only should be in the realm of non-action; the myriad things will then naturally transform. Forget your physical form, discard your wisdom, and allow morality and the myriad beings to forget one another. The natural *qi*-energy is confused, vast and boundless, remove thoughts and release your consciousness, be

like dead ashes, stupefied without spirit. The myriad beings are numerous and confused, many and various, yet all of them can return to their original nature, each and every one that returns to his original nature nevertheless emerges unintentionally, that which is muddled and ignorant preserve the original genuineness, in your entire life they will not depart; if there is perception to some extent, that is departing from your genuine origin, do not inquire into the name of the things, do not survey their actual situation, the origin of the myriad beings naturally grows."

This passage addresses the nature of the relationship between non-action (*wu wei* 無為) and nurturing the heart-mind (*yang xin* 養心), where nurturing the heart-mind implies allowing the heart and mind of a person to enter into the realm of the Dao and adopt an attitude of non-action, allowing external objects to self-transform, self-birth, without the subject interfering or knowing the external objects. Although here this is described as nurturing the heart-mind, in the basic principle that the Dao is unconscious of its birthing objects, instead allowing objects to self-generate and self-transform, the underlying meaning of the passages quoted from the *Zhuangzi* are essentially in alignment with the *Hengxian*.[13]

If we take the ideas of "self-transformation " and "self-generation " to be close in meaning, then we can locate an even larger amount of textual evidence for our case. As most of us know, "self-transformation " is also an important idea in the *Laozi* , where it appears in two places, for example:

Dao eternally attempts nothing and accomplishes nothing, however there is nothing it does not do. If the ruler can abide by the principle of "Dao," the myriad beings can then self-transform and rise. The myriad beings arise by themselves and grow by themselves, however, when greed comes into being, I shall employ "the simplicity of no name" to subdue it. Using the "way of the simplicity of no name" to subdue, then it is unlikely that greed will emerge in their hearts, if the myriad beings don't have greed in their hearts, all under heaven will then be able to obtain stability and tranquility. (*Laozi*: 37)

The phrase, "the myriad beings self-transform" appears in the Guodian bamboo manuscript texts and copies A and B of the Mawangdui silk manuscripts with the alternative phrasing of, "the myriad objects self-act" (zi wei 自為), whereas the "kingdom will self-settle" (*tian xia jiang zi ding* 天下將自定) appears as "the myriad things will self-settle" in the Guodian manuscript and "Heaven and Earth will self-right (right themselves)" in the Mawangdui A and B versions:

> I attempt nothing and accomplish nothing the common people then develop by themselves, I am fond of tranquility, the people then supervise themselves, I do not repress the people, the people then prosper on their own, I have no desires, the people then also become simple and honest. (*Laozi*: 57)
>
> 我無爲而民自化, 我好靜而民自正, 我無事而民自富, 我無欲而民自樸。

Whilst copies A and B of the Mawangdui manuscripts are the same as the Wang Bi recension, Guodian copy A runs as follows:

> I do not repress the people, the people then prosper on their own, I attempt nothing and accomplish nothing, the people then act on their own, I am fond of tranquility, the people then supervise themselves, I do not have desires, the people then also become simple and honest.

What we see in *Laozi*: 37 is a form of political philosophy, describing the relationship between Dao and the myriad objects, wherein the objects transform themselves, whilst the ruler safeguards Dao, leaving the myriad beings to transform and settle by themselves. Only when they begin to "transform and yearn to act" does the ruler step forward to "quieten them with nameless simplicity" (鎮之以無名之樸). *Laozi*: 57 addresses a similar topic, with the Sage Person engaging in " non-action" (*wuwei* 無為), quietness (*hao jing* 好靜), non-endeavors (*wu shi* 物事, acting as if there were no business) and non-desire (*wu yu* 無欲); that is maintaining an attitude of no motives, no consciousness and non-action towards his subjects, who in turn engage in self-transformation , self-righting, self-enriching and self-simplifying. This form of political philosophy acts as a useful foil to the idea of "self-acting" as political philosophy in the *Hengxian*. In fact, the *Laozi*: 17 offers us yet another similarly voiced example.

> The highest leader, below they only know of his existence … free and unconstrained, does not issue many government decrees, the endeavors will be of great success, the common people all say they accomplished it on their own. (*Laozi*: 17)

For this passage, the A and B copies from Mawangdui are essentially the same as the Wang Bi recension; the C copy of the Guodian manuscripts is largely similar except for the passage, "the endeavors will be of great success."

This passage expresses the idea that the ultimate/consummate ruler merely leaves an impression of his existence upon his people; such a ruler "prizes words" (*gui yan* 貴言, a compound similar to

"being sparse with words" (*xi yan* 希言) or forgetting to speak (*wang yan* 忘言), and they refrain from causing the least interference towards their subjects, so that their subjects happily claim, "I am so of my own accord," as they go about doing what they wish to. Only such a ruler can achieve the political aim of: "the endeavors will be of great success." On the one hand, the *Hengxian* also strives after similar political aims, as its author emphasizes: "All the deeds under heaven can obtain appropriate outcomes and achieve their goals." On the other, they also seek to ensure such effects as: "All the endeavors under heaven can be done on their own. Regarding all the deeds under heaven … all are accomplished by autonomous action." Such political aims are highly similar to those of the *Laozi*: 17.

Reviewing the quotations from the *Laozi*, we find that self-transformation is often the vehicle for other changes, such as self-righting, enriching, simplifying or being self-so , which are often related to the process of transformation. We can find several other terms that employ the character "self" (*zi* 自) across a range of Daoist and related texts .

Chapter 32 of the *Laozi* contains the text: "the myriad beings naturally comply, there is no one who gives commands to the common people, the common people yet attain equilibrium on their own"; whilst Chapter 64 says: "assist the myriad beings for their own conduct." The "Normal Course for Rulers and Kings" ("Yingdiwang" 應帝王) chapter of the *Zhuangzi* has "let the myriad beings be happy on their own accord," whilst the "Zaiwo" 在宥 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* says: "the things shall govern themselves on their own," and "things will become powerful on their own." The *Guanzi* 管子 "Xingshijie" 形勢解 chapter has: "the common people voluntarily comply with the law," and "the people work hard on their own"; whilst the " Inner Workings" ("Neiye" 內業) chapter has "quiet and placid, then can succeed on their own," and "the essential *qi* energy comes on its own (voluntarily)." The Mawangdui silk manuscript of the *Shiliu Jing*'s 十六經 "Shundao"順道 says, "things often manage themselves," "things often carry out on their own," and "come on my own and go on my own." The *Huainanzi* and the *Hanshi Waizhuan*《韓詩外傳》have: "Heaven and Earth naturally transform," while the " Taizu" 泰族 chapter of the *Huainanzi* 淮南子and the "Jingcheng" 精誠 chapter of the *Wenzi* 文子 have: "the myriad beings form their own appearance"; the *Huainanzi* also says: "the myriad beings under heaven harmonize themselves," and the "Caoxiang Guoshijia" 曹相國世家 section of the *Histories* states 史記: "the Dao of politics esteems quietness and peacefulness, and lets the people manage themselves."

Ikeda Tomohisa uses one term from the examples above to serve as a heading for all such examples, calling all terms of the self- form (*zi*

自…), “self-so ” (*zi ran* 自然). In Chapter 12 of his monograph, *Zhuangzi—The Changing Approaches to Dao*,[14] “The Non-Action of the Sage Person and the Self-So Nature of the Myriad Things” he points out that various texts in the Daoist tradition use the terms “self-so” or “self-” to describe highly related thought processes, all of which revolve around the idea of the non-action mode of existence of the Dao and Sage Persons; conversely the myriad things or the hundred clans exist in an active and changeable form of being “self-so.”[15] These two modes of existence might be placed in an interactive relationship such as subject–object or cause–effect. We agree that the case is just as Ikeda Tomohisa suggests; all forms of “self”- terms are related to descriptions of those states of the myriad beings or the hundred clans. We feel that this non-action/“self-so” model can be equally well applied to the *Hengxian*, which appears in the phraseology of the text: “Not assigning positions” (*wu she* 無舍) or “Not intervening” (*wu yu*無與)–self-acting (*zi wei* 自為). We will revisit this in the next section of this chapter.

From the analyses offered above we can conclude that although there are not a great number of examples of the term “self-generation” in ancient texts , if we expand our search to include various related expressions, including “self-so ,” we find that “self-generation” is not a lone phenomenon; in fact, many texts in or related to the Daoist tradition, over a long period of time, have engaged in discussions regarding “self-generation” from a variety of angles and in detail. From the perspective of ontological systems, “self-generation” indicates that all things including humans are born from an unconscious process. From the perspective of political philosophy, “self-generation” indicates that all things including humans are self-acting, therefore the ultimate principle of rule is non-action. In our research of the *Hengxian*, it is essential to contextualize the ideas of “self-generation” and “self-action ” within a larger structure of thought to arrive at correct interpretations.

4 The Parallel Between the Sections of the *Hengxian*

For what reason is the idea that Constancy does not generate *qi*, and *qi* is self-generated , emphasized in the ontological process in the first half of the *Hengxian*? Why are the “self-generation, self-arising” aspects of *qi* repeatedly stressed? If we confine our search to the first half of the text, we find that internal evidence alone makes for an unconvincing case; therefore, it becomes necessary to look at the text in search for the rationale behind *qi*, which is not generated of Constancy, and which is self-generated and self-arising. This is an

important breakthrough in our interpretation of the *Hengxian's* entire system of thought.

Firstly, let us point out here that we feel that the *Hengxian* introduces the idea of self-generation in the creation process in its first half so as to present a forerunner to the political philosophy it introduces in the second section.[16] “Self-generation” in the first section is mirrored with “self-action ” in the second half, as well as the idea of cause (*yin* 因). Let us look at a few examples from the latter half of the *Hengxian*:

> All the endeavors under Heaven are self-produced. At the time of conducting endeavors, continue to use old methods (for endeavors that have already occurred), and do not make alterations.
>
> 舉天[下]之事, 自作。爲事, 用以不可更也。(第七號簡)
>
> All names under Heaven are empty things created by human beings, but once they are passed on and become a tradition, do not make any alterations.
>
> 舉天下之名, 虛 (屬), 襲以不可改也。(第十號簡)
>
> Regarding all conduct under Heaven, do not set them in one certain place, do not intervene in them, let them (the beings are generated by constant *qi*) be autonomous. As for the natural life of all under Heaven, also take a similar attitude, in this manner there is nothing under Heaven that cannot go smoothly in its own path.
>
> 舉天下之爲也, 無舍也, 無與也, 而能自爲也。(第十一號簡)舉天下之生, 同也。其事無不复。(第十二號簡)
>
> Regarding the constant *qi that* generating the beings, it follows what is great. There is conduct (the constant *qi* originally generates the beings) simple, heavy and thick, no longer preserves, there is conduct, then there can be the two results of accomplishing goals and not accomplishing goals.
>
> 恆氣之生, 因(第九號簡)之大。作, 其 旄不自若。作, 庸有果與不果.[17]

It appears that the *Hengxian* is intended to act as a political reference book for wise kings, rulers and scholars, because the upholding of the matters of the kingdom (舉天下之事), like the generation and actions of *qi*, must be done in accordance with the principles of non-attachment and non-involvement, allowing the affairs of the kingdom to regulate themselves. Maintaining the kingdom once it has been established works in the same way; according to the statement to this effect in the original text , we might extrapolate the following sentence: “Upholding the birth of the kingdom, non-attached, non-involved, and birth occurs of itself.”

It is precisely because *qi* is self-generated and self-acting (birth and actions take place of their own accord) that *qi* is able to generate other things, the myriad things, including humanity all fall under the category of "self-generation, self-arising," that is they are self-active (*ziwei* 自為) in terms of their behavior (actions), so that the ruler in his political actions must adopt a position of non-action in response to them.

Although the term non-action (*wuwei*無為) does not appear in the *Hengxian*, the similarly structured terms non-attachment and non-involvement, both of which are behaviors required of the wise king, ruler or scholar, embody precisely the attitude of non-action. In addition, the phrases "do not go to the extreme" (無忤極) and "must not be placed in unfair positions" (無非其所) also appear in the *Hengxian*. These refer to avoiding taking things to their extreme and allowing each thing its place, respectively. These several non-X forms are all related to the central idea of non-action. On the other hand, the subject's non-action, that is, the unconscious, non-motive, non-interference, non-compulsive political stance, leads necessarily to self-acting on the part of the object, the myriad beings and the hundred clans as a result. Their complementary relationship is quite apparent in the *Hengxian*. To borrow a turn of phrase from the Guodian *Laozi* Copy A, "Dao is constantly non-active"; "Dao forever is in non-action, if the ruler abides by the principle of Dao, the myriad beings will then be able to act on their own accord," "I do not act and the myriad beings then act on their own accord, or as the *Zhuangzi* has it, "The rulers in ancient times presided over the people … did not do it on their own behalf. … The ruler does not act and therefore the people under Heaven can succeed in their affairs," or alternatively, as the "Daofa" chapter of *Jingfa*, the Mawangdui silk manuscript belonging to the Yellow Emperor Series, puts it:

> When the one who holds the Dao grasps the affairs under Heaven, he is required to adopt flexibility and is not stubborn, accomplishes but does not reside in those accomplishments, does not neglect action, and does not have a selfish attitude. When there are affairs under Heaven, those few forms and names (serving as a fixed order) and commands (serving as policy and decree), will then spontaneously exhibit their function. If only a system of order (an already established position and order) and commands (policy, decree) is established, then there is no one that can escape its control and supervision.
>
> It does not matter if the things are big or small, they can all go on their own to their destination. To go against, to obey, to die, to be born, these situations occur; all are decided by the things

themselves. After establishing the positions and fixing the order, the beings on their own handle things correctly

The reference to "the generation of constant *qi*" in the latter half of the *Hengxian* mirrors the reference in the first half. If we had not reached a correct interpretation of the former examples, we would find it impossible to explain why the author goes on to introduce the birth of constant *qi*.

A large majority of scholars continue to refer to the process of creation to explain the generation of constant *qi*; it is on this basis that Pang Pu 龐樸 suggests moving the ninth bamboo slip containing this phrase forward in the text to follow on from the fifth slip, otherwise, he contends, it is inexplicable. In fact, the "generation of constant *qi*" has no place in the creation process that runs from Constancy, through uncertain beings to self-generated *qi*, rather it represents all things that are born because of constant *qi*.[18] Along the same lines, the researchers' elision of the last phrase of slip nine to the first phrase of slip ten, to read "the generation of constant *qi*, because of spoken names," is illogical.

Within the political philosophy of the *Hengxian*, the wise king, ruler or scholar adopts a basic attitude towards all that is generated of constant *qi*, and that attitude is of following along. In parallel to this idea, the *Huainanzi*: "Taizu" states:

> Heaven, Earth, and the four seasons, are not capable of directly producing the myriad beings, the numinous and the luminous come into contact and the Yin and Yang weld together, only then that can cause the myriad beings to generate; the sage rules all under Heaven, he cannot forcefully change the character of the people, but rather complies with the character the people already have, in order to wash off the contaminated parts, he guides them towards transformation into having good qualities. Therefore, following the norm to handle affairs, the result is remarkable: not following the norm, the results yielded are minute.

Wenzi : " Ziran" states:

> Laozi said: … "The manner of conduct of the kings of the past was not to intentionally do things, but rather they were simply following. When they employed means of enforcement, they did not deliberately do something, but rather they were just maintaining (what was already there). Therefore, the one who can follow, his actions will gradually be greater, the one who acts deliberately his endeavors will gradually be smaller. The one who can maintain will have stable endeavors, the endeavors of the one

who acts deliberately will decline."

Shenzi : "Yinxun" contains a particularly pertinent passage:

> The Heavenly Dao manifests in its ability to follow and its affairs are gradually greater, the one who acts deliberately, his affairs are gradually smaller. Following refers to following human desires. The people do not have things they do not consider for themselves, the ruler needs to use this characteristic of human desires to let the people use it for themselves … If one does not find the place where the people think for their own accord, the ruler thus cannot use them. Therefore, the ruler needs to use what the people consider as their own interest, you do not want the people to merely serve the ruler, if the people merely serve the ruler, then at the end the ruler has no way to employ the people.

As in *Huainanzi*: *Taizu*, the term transform (*hua* 化) in *Shenzi*: "Yinxun" should be read as "act" (*zuo* 作).

Surveying the comparative readings from the *Huainanzi*, *Wenzi* and *Shenzi* , we feel that the phrase that crosses slips 9–10 of the *Hengxian* should be reparsed from.

"……regarding constant *qi* generating the myriad beings, it just follows…(恆氣之生,因……)"To read instead as: "regarding constant *qi* generating the myriad beings, it follows the great. There is action … there is action …." (恆氣之生,因之大。作……。作……。) So that the entire passage reads: regarding constant *qi* generating the myriad beings, it follows the great. Simple and honest, heavy and thick is then no longer preserved; there is action, then there can be the two results of accomplishing or not accomplishing goals

恆氣之生，因之大。作，其樸旹不自若。作，庸有果与不果。

This is the only logical interpretation, with following (*yin*) and action (*zuo*) being complementary terms: "to follow, then can be great, there is action, then the original can not be maintained, then there can be the two results of accomplishing or not accomplishing goals" (因之"則"大", "作"就會有"不自若"、就會有"果與不果).

According to our interpretation of the *Shenzi* we decide that the subject of following (*yin* 因) is the self-acting of humankind. Therefore, we suggest that "following" where it appears in the *Hengxian* may also be understood in conjunction with "self-action " to give us a more logical interpretation.

In texts in the Daoist tradition, discussions of the parallel drawn between the non-action of Dao and Sage Persons and the self-so of the 10,000 objects and hundred clans often employ the notion of *yin* or related terms such as *shun* (順), *sui* (隨) and so on, all of which can be encapsulated by the English translation "to follow." The result of such

policies is often a combination of the political aims of "nothing is left undone" and "the kingdom is well-governed." There are countless examples of this arrangement of ideas; in addition to the three examples quoted above, we can offer some further supporting evidence.

> The unnamed said: "you should place yourself where you can preserve your inherent nature, where there is nothing to decorate (outer appearance) your heart-mind, be in a peaceful and quiet non-active place allowing the *qi* to join, confirming to the nature of the beings, there is not the least bit of individual favoritism, all under heaven will then be governed." (*Zhuangzi*: "Yingdiwang")
>
> The myriad beings all have their inherent forms, therefore one can rely on this inherent form to guide them. Because one can comply with the form of the myriad beings to guide them, therefore while being still, one can establish the natural attributes of the myriad beings, while acting, one can comply with the objective rule of the myriad beings … By relying merely on one person's ability, the millet grain cannot be enough to eat. Complying with nature, then even if we allow the slaves to supervise, there will be enough to spare. Therefore, Laozi said: "depend on the natural development of the myriad beings, I do not dare to act." (*Hanfeizi*: "Yuelao")
>
> Following is the manner of the ruler's actions and intentional action is the manner of the official's conduct. Intentional action can cause complications but following is not disturbing. (*Lüshi Chunqiu*: " Renshu")
>
> Therefore, the sage emphasizes the cultivation of the intrinsic natural character, and does not decorate the external, preserves the essence, does not give rise to wicked sorcery, still and unconcerned he does not act, therefore there is nothing left unaccomplished, he does not deliberately govern anything, however the state is governed well. The so-called non-action refers to doing things without surpassing the natural character of the beings by forceful human action; nothing is left unaccomplished, means to comply with the nature of the beings. The so-called non-governing, means not to change the nature of the beings, and the so-called nothing is left ungoverned, refers to complying with the inevitable nature of the beings. (*Huainanzi*: " Yuandao")
>
> Therefore, regarding the endeavors of all under Heaven, one cannot take rash action, but can only comply with the natural character of the beings to apply derivation. (*Huainanzi*: "Yuandao")

5 Concluding Remarks

To summarize, the *Hengxian* does not describe a theory of creation for the mere sake of it, but to introduce a complementary theory of political philosophy. The two halves of the text are also complementary to each other, in that the political principles of the latter half strictly obey the creative principles of the first half. If Primordial Constancy is without material existence, simple, quiet, empty, then the wise king must adopt an attitude of non-attachment and non-involvement. Seeing as *qi* is self-generated and self-arising, then all things including humankind and its related affairs are all "self-acting," and "the actions of the kingdom" are also "self-acting"; towards birth and actions originating in constant *qi*, one must adopt an attitude of following along. This is the political philosophy of the *Hengxian* in a nutshell. To adopt an expression from *Huainanzi*: "Taizu": "the myriad beings all have their natural rule, only if people follow the objective rule, they can then engage in government," and to borrow from the *Lunheng*: " Ziran": "unintentionally engage in conscious activity and the myriad beings will transform on their own, have no intention in the emergence of the myriad beings and they will be generated on their own."

To conclude, the phrases "*qi* is self-generated " and "*qi* is self-generated and self-arising" pose no contradiction to the latter half of the *Hengxian*, nor do they appear conflicting in any way. We do not accept the suggestion that there are difficulties created by disordered or lost bamboo slips. We feel that these phrases obey their own innate logic. Not only that but they agree with a variety of Daoist texts, the *Laozi* at the fore of them, in the message that they convey.

Footnotes

1

The interpretation of the graph Simplicity, (*pu* 樸), the phrase, "as if empty and muddled" (*ruo jiji mengmeng* 若寂寂夢夢), and the parsing of the bamboo manuscript as a whole, has sparked much debate in academic circles. The interpretations and translations that stem from them here represent only this author's own interpretation. For more detailed discussions, see Cao Feng , "Discussions on the Ordering and Dividing of the *Hengxian*", *Qinghua University Magazine* 3 (2005), see also Cao Feng, "Notes on Ordering, Dividing and Interpreting the Hengxian," *Confucius Research* 2000-Net May 10, 2004; and Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts Research Net May 16, 2004. However, the notation of graphs and parsing of the sentence, "*qi*-energy is self-generated and not generated by Constancy, *qi*-energy is self-generated and self-acting. The creation of beings by constant energy is not independent without interference," are essentially agreed upon and not a subject of debate.

2

Regarding *huo* (“uncertain things”), many scholars view it as an idea of space (*yu* 域) “space.” The author understands this *huo* as an initial undefined existence; it is very possible that it is a predecessor of *Qi*, therefore, like *qi*, it is a constant being. Cao Feng , “Four Hermeneutical Problems in the *Hengxian*”: in the third section, of this paper, titled: “Knowing the Extreme Where Thought Cannot Be Higher” (知機而無思不天) there is a detailed discussion of uncertainty (*huo* 或). See Cao Feng 曹峰,*A Study on the Thought in the Shanghai Museum Collection of Chu Manuscripts*, Taipei: Wanjuanlou Books Corporation, pp. 160–167.

3

For example, Pang Pu 龐樸, “Suggested Readings of *Hengxian,*” in Jiang Guanghui ed. *Bulletin of Research into the History of Thought in Ancient China* vol. 2. Beijing: Research Lab for History of Thought, History Department, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences , June 2004, pp. 21–23.

Also, Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts Research Net (BSMN), visited April 26, 2004, states that, “the *qi* within it is born of itself,” and “apart from this none other could give birth to *qi.*” Liao Mingchun 廖名春 in “New Insights on the Shanghai Museum Chu State Bamboo Manuscript Hengxian” in *History of Chinese Philosophy* vol. 3, 2004, pp. 83–92 states, that “there is no creative relationship” between “Constancy” and “*qi*.”?

Chen Ligui 陳麗桂, in “Meaning and Structure in the Third Shanghai Museum Bamboo Manuscript Hengxian,” see BSMN, visited April 19, 2004, says, “the production of this *qi* is naturally occurring, without the participation of external powers, with no route and no source. It is not born of vacuous *Heng* (亘) which acts as the ultimate source, instead it is born naturally in and of itself, therefore the text states that it is self-born and self-acting.” All such explanations demonstrate a lack of valid argumentation.

4

Wu Genyou 吳根友, “An Analysis of Philosophical Thought in Shanghai Museum Chu Bamboo Manuscript Hengxian,” in Ding Sixin ed. *Chu Region Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts Research Part Two* Wuhan: Hubei Educational Publishing House, 2005, pp. 68–69; see also BSMN, visited May 8, 2004.

5

Guo Qiyong, “*Hengxian*—The Lost Treatise on Forms and Names in Daoist-Legalist Thought,” in Jianghan Forum Collection of Papers, pp. 5–9. Also see http://www.bsm.org.cn , May 8, 2004.

6

Ding Sixing, “An Interpretation of the Chu Bamboo Slips Hengxian Chapters,” in Ding Sixing ed. *Research of the Chu Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts* (vol. II) (aforementioned), pp. 98, 100. Also see http://www.bsm.org.cn , July 25, 2004.

7

Liu Yiqun, “On ‘Self-Generation’ in the Hengxian,” in Ding Sixing ed. *Reseach of the Chu Bamboo and Silk Manuscripts* vol. II, ibid., p. 82. Also see http://www.bsm.org.cn , June

13, 2004.

8

Liu Yiqun, “On ‘Self-Generation’ in the Hengxian” (aforementioned). In this paper he cites a passage from the “Zaiwo” chapter of the *Zhuangzi* , in which appears the statement: “the things indeed are self-generated ”; however what he seeks to explain is the connection between “self-generation” and “return” (復), and he does not explain how *qi* is self-generated.

9

Li Rui, “‘Qi is Self-Generated ’: The Unique Cosmogony of the Hengxian,” *Journal of History of Chinese Philosophy* 3 (2004): 93–99.

10

Whilst it is true that in the process of creation described in the *Lunheng*, *qi* comes after Heaven and Earth, which differs from the process described in the *Hengxian*, this point does not adversely affect our drawing inspiration from the *Lunheng* in interpreting the *Hengxian*.

11

The additions and corrections to this passage are made according to Wang Niansun’s (王念孫) *Reading Notes* (讀書雜誌 Nanjing: Jiangsu Guji Press, 1985, pp. 948–949). A similar passage is to be found in the “Jingcheng” 精誠 chapter of the *Wenzi* 文子:

Laozi said: Heaven reaches its height, Earth reaches its thickness, the moon illuminates the night sky, the sun illuminates day time, the star alignment is bright and shining, Yin and Yang transform and emerge. These natural phenomena are not caused by human intention, rather they abide by a regular pattern, naturally self-so . Therefore, the transformation of Yin-Yang and the four times, are not to grow all the myriad beings; rain and dew descend on time, it is not to nurture vegetation. The numinous and the luminous come into contact, Yin and Yang harmonize with each other; the myriad things then naturally arise by their own accord.

12

See Yan Beiming 嚴北溟 and Yan Jiezhuan 嚴捷撰 *Liezi Yizhu* 列子譯注, Shanghai Guji Press, 1986, foreword, pp. 4–5.

13

As a matter of a fact, Ding Sixing has already noted the connection between “self-generated ” and “self-transforming”; however, he also maintains that “even though the “Zeyang” and “Autumn Floods” and other chapters of the *Zhuangzi* include the notion of ‘self-transforming,’ all the appearances are relatively human-oriented, unlike the characteristics of the “self-generated” in the *Hengxian*.” See the aforementioned book by Ding Sixing, *An Interpretation of the Chu Bamboo Slips Hengxian Chapters*. Ding Sixing compares and opposes the cosmogenic “self-generation” and the political “ self-

transformation"; as the text repeatedly discusses, the purpose of situating the cosmogenic "self-generation" is precisely to present the rationale of "self-action" of human beings in and towards the world; "self-generation" and "self-action " are not oppositional in their characteristics. I myself maintain that the versions of "self-generation" and "self-transformation" that appear in the "Autumn Floods" and "Zeyang chapters of the *Zhuangzi* are also not oppositional in their characteristics.

14

Ikeda Tomohisa (translated by Wang Qifa and Cao Feng), *New Research on Daoist Thought— Zhuangzi as the Focus*, Kaifeng: Zhongzhou Ancient Books Press, 2009, pp. 527–598.

15

While describing the sage and the Dao, there are indeed sayings that refer to "self-so non-action" or "non-action self-so," taking both sides and merging the two into one to present a corresponding relationship; however, these are from a rather late period. The earliest such usage appears in Wang Chong's *Lun Heng*. For further details see Chapter 12, Section 4, item 2 of the previously mentioned book by Ikeda Tomohisa.

16

According to the articles the author wrote on the *Hengxian* he has expressed methods and ways of conception and has separated the *Hengxian* into two sections, see Cao Feng : *A Discussion of the Organization and Chapter Separation in the Hengxian* (Ibid) and *Organization, Chapter Separation and Readers Notes to the Hengxian* (Ibid).

17

Following slip number nine should be slip number eleven, this has been noted by the author in his articles *A Discussion of the Organization and Chapter Separation in the Hengxian* (Ibid) and *Organization, Chapter Separation and Readers Notes to the Hengxian* (Ibid).

18

Peng Pu 龐樸: *A Reading of the Hengxian* (ibid.).

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6. The Idea of Names or Naming as One of the Key Concepts in the *Huangdi Sijing*: Discussing the Relationship Between the Concepts of the Schools of Dao, Names and Legality

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1 Preface

This essay centers its research primarily on the concept of Names and its related concepts in the text known as the *Huangdi Sijing*. First and foremost, we must answer the following two questions: first, why do we say "the text known as the *Huangdi Sijing*"; and second, why should we look into the concept of Names in that text, and what is the value of such research?

The text known as the *Huangdi Sijing* is a set of silk manuscripts from a large haul of such manuscripts excavated from the No. 3 Han dynasty tomb (the person buried there may have been the second-generation Vassal Lord, Li Xi, son of Li Cang, President 丞相 to the King of Changsha) at the Mawangdui site, located in the eastern suburbs of the city of Changsha, Hunan Province in the period from November to December 1973. The official name for this set of manuscripts is the *Unidentified Texts Prefixed to the Laozi B Manuscript Excavated from the Han Tomb at the Mawangdui Site* .

The silk manuscript under discussion appears on a piece of silk measuring approximately 48 cm wide; under a red line appear five texts written in clerical script, which are the "*Jingfa*" 經法, *The Sixteen Classics* (*Shiliu Jing* 十六經),[1] the *Cheng* 稱, the *Daoyuan* 道原 and the *Laozi* B text. The texts known as the *Huangdi Sijing* are the first of these four texts, which were copied onto the same piece of silk as, and appear before the *Laozi* B text. From indicators such as the hand in

which they are written and the taboo characters that are observed (i.e. the taboos are observed for Liu Bang 劉邦, founder of the Han dynasty, but not for Emperor Hui, personal name Liu Ying or Emperor Wen, personal name Liu Heng), we might deduce that these five texts were hand-copied in the period after the reign of Emperor Hui and after Liu Bang's wife Lü was named Empress Dowager; that is, in the early Han dynasty, and before the reign of Emperor Wen, in the year 168 BCE, the date of the construction of the tomb from which they were excavated.

After the excavation of these manuscripts, the four unidentified texts were given the official names mentioned above.[2] They appear with these names in publications such as the *First Volume of Silk Manuscripts from the Mawangdui Han Tomb*, published three times in September 1974, January 1975 and March 1980 by the Wenwu Publishing House, which offered photographic images of the original manuscript and a full transliteration. Following this, an essay by Tang Lan 唐蘭 had a significant effect on the scholarly community. In *An Initial Exploration of the Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor*, he suggests that these four texts may be the *Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor* mentioned in the *Yiwenzhi* of the *Hanshu*.[3]

We will not go into the details of Tang Lan's argument in detail here for considerations of length. Instead we only wish to raise the fact that in general, in the academic community, and especially in Mainland China, many scholars accept and support Tang Lan's viewpoint; and furthermore, in related texts we hardly ever see these texts referred to as "Unidentified Texts"; rather, they are generally called the *Huangdi Sijing* or *The Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor*. Currently available transcriptions of these texts also adopt a similar title. In 1989, Yu Mingguang 余明光 published *Huangdi Sijing and Huang-Lao Thought,* [4] in 1993, he published *A Modern Commentary and Translation of Huangdi Sijing* [5] (we will refer to these publications as Yu 1 and Yu 2). Chen Guying 陳鼓應 published the similarly titled *A Modern Commentary and Translation of Huangdi Sijing – Silk Manuscripts Excavated from a Han Tomb at Mawangdui* (we will refer to this as Chen[6]). Zheng Kai 鄭開, Zhang Huishu 張慧姝 and Gu Bin 谷斌 co-published, as part of the Modern Chinese Translations of Daoist Classics Series, a modern translation of the *Huangdi Sijing* and the *Daodejing* (which we will refer to as the CASS version).[7]

Japanese scholar Sawada Takio translated and annotated a book entitled *Huangdi Sijing*.[8] As a result, *Huangdi Sijing* has already become a commonly used and accepted name for the *Unidentified Texts Prefixed to the Laozi B Manuscript Excavated from the Han Tomb at the Mawangdui Site* . However, there are alternative points of view: for example, Wei Qipeng 魏啟鵬 calls them the *Books of the Yellow*

Emperor (*Huangdishu* 黃帝書) in his *Notes and Evidences on the Mawangdui Han Tomb Silk Manuscripts*, "*The Books of the Yellow Emperor*" (which we will call Wei's version).[9] I myself am not entirely convinced that the title *Huangdi Sijing* is appropriate, and I am opposed to considering these four texts as entire texts written by one person at one time; however, in keeping with the current scholarly conventions and for convenience we will continue to refer to these texts as the *Huangdi Sijing* with the prefix "the texts known as," to reflect my cautious and conditional acceptance of this term.[10]

What is the significance of exploring the thought related to Names in the text known as the *Huangdi Sijing*? Forty years have passed since the silk manuscripts were excavated from the Mawangdui Han dynasty tomb site. There have been many papers and books published on the text already, and it seems that as a subject for research, this area is becoming quieter, and drawing ever less attention in scholarly fields. I myself feel that there is a lack, for the most part, in the research into this area, in terms of conceptual and structural analysis of the text; of the three major concepts in the *Huangdi Sijing*, i.e. Dao, Names and Legality, in the past Dao and Legality have received the most attention, whilst Names has been relatively overlooked, so that we are presented with a structure composed of two rather than three parts. In terms of the intellectual heritage of the text , authors focus on the aspects related to the Daoist and Legalist schools and overlook thought related to the School of Names .[11]

As a result, if we are unable to make up for the above-mentioned lack in scholarly research, we will find ourselves unable to firmly grasp the conceptual content of the *Huangdi Sijing* in its entirety, leaving our analyses lacking in solid meaning. Therefore, it behooves us to embark on an investigation into the significance of Names to re-assess its meaning in the *Huangdi Sijing*, to see whether we will reach a fresh and objective conclusion.

As I have mentioned above, I do not agree that the text known as the *Huangdi Sijing* is a complete text written by one person at one time, and contend that although there is a clear relationship between the " *Jingfa*", *Shiliu Jing*, *Cheng* and *Daoyuan* parts of the text , they are also independent works, each with their own key topics, tendencies of thought and means of expression. However, looking at their treatment of Naming, we see that there is much in common between these four parts. In a sustained analysis, I have striven to clearly state these points of commonality, whilst being wary of ignoring their individuality. In these four silk manuscripts , the three-way system of Dao, Names and Legality is expressed most clearly in the "Jingfa" chapter, and so this chapter will be the primary focus of my investigation.

As stated above, there have been several transliterations published of the *Huangdi Sijing*. On the subject of the "Jingfa" chapter, the Mawangdui Silk Manuscript Research Team of Tokyo University has published Unidentified Text "Jingfa", Preceding Laozi B from the Han Tomb Site at Mawangdui, which contains annotated translations of the " Sidu" (四度, 1997), "Lun" (論, 1998), " Wanglun" (亡論, 1999) and "Lunyue" (論約, 1999) sections. Where I quote from transliterations of the "*Jingfa"* section, I adhere closely to the Tokyo University annotated translations, however, in some places I have made amendments. Where I refer to the "Daofa" 道法, " *Guoci*" 國次, " Junzheng" 君正, " Liufen" 六分 and " Mingli" 名理 chapters and the remaining "Shiliu" Jing, "Cheng" and "Daoyuan" sections, for which Tokyo University has yet to publish annotated translations, although I have referred to several transliterated versions, I rely primarily upon the photographic reproduction published by the Wenwu Publishing House and make my own judgments on recognizing characters in the text ; where I disagree with published transliterations I have made this clear in the form of footnotes. Translations of the Japanese annotations are my own work.

2 The Kinds of Names Seen in the *Huangdi Sijing*

There are several concepts (terms) that appear in the *Huangdi Sijing* besides the afore-mentioned Dao, Names and Legality: for example, Heaven (Tian天), Principle (Li理), (rule by) Punishment (Xing刑), (rule by) Virtue (De德), Yin (陰), Yang (陽), Spirit (Shen神), Brightness (Ming明), Emptiness (Xu虛), Quietness/Stillness (Jing靜), Unadorned Plainness (Su素), Measure (Du度), Extreme/Limit (Ji極) and so on. If we do not lay a firm grasp upon the exact meaning of such concepts, their position and relationship to each other, our understanding of the *Huangdi Sijing* will certainly be unfaithful to the original. For example, when these four silk manuscripts were newly excavated, owing to the influence of the politico-cultural environment of the 1970s, an undue emphasis was placed on the Legality aspect of the text ; researchers were only interested in this one aspect and claimed that the silk manuscripts belonged exclusively to the Legalist lineage.[12] Meanwhile other scholars lay an excessive emphasis on some concepts, overlooking others in order to support their own academic claims, as for example when Chen Guying consistently claims that the *Huangdi Sijing* is a Daoist text.[13] Here again, we cannot state that there is no evidence of either a Legalist or Daoist tendency in the *Huangdi Sijing*, but to categorize it based on such evidence is unfair to the broader body of evidence available.

At present the clear majority of scholars call the kind of thought seen in the *Huangdi Sijing* “Huang-Lao” thought . This term was popular in the Early Han dynasty, and described a system of thought that was primarily guided by Daoist precepts, whilst adopting tendencies from the Schools of Names , Legalists and other major schools of thought. This is indeed the kind of thought that we see in the *Huangdi Sijing*. However, there are several questions that remain unanswered, such as: in what period did this type of thought occur and develop? Why is there no mention in either the first or second person to Huang-Lao thought in earlier Pre-Qin texts ? What are the key principles of Huang-Lao thought? What are the main ideas and the representative figures? How should we describe the development of this school of thought ? These are questions that were being asked before the excavation of the *Huangdi Sijing* , but we are yet to find conclusive answers.[14]

In the *Huangdi Sijing*, the name of the Yellow Emperor (Huang Di 黃帝) appears only in the “Shiliu Jing” section, whilst the name Laozi does not appear at all. Whether or not it is appropriate to call four silk manuscript texts that vary to a certain extent by the common name of Huang-Lao thought is another question whose answer remains to be considered. In just the same way as we lump together the Unidentified Ancient texts that precede the *Laozi B* manuscript from the Han Tomb at Mawangdui as the so-called *Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor*, to label these as Huang-Lao thought or as belonging to a Huang-Lao school is to persistently use a fuzzy (or misleading) academic term. Whilst we make use of that term, we ought to pursue clarification of the concepts to which it refers.

Some scholars choose to use the word Dao-Legalist to summarize the main principles of the Unidentified Texts, as Qiu Xigui does in his paper, *The Unidentified Texts Before and After the Laozi A and B* Manuscripts *from the Mawangdui Site and Dao Legalism*—on the *Techniques of the Heart I* (*Xinshushang* 心術上) and *Clarifying the Heart* (*Baixin* 白心) Chapters of the *Guanzi* and indentifies them as works by Shen Dao 愼到 and Tian Pian 田駢. Japanese scholars Kanaya Osamu and Ikeda Tomohisa both use the saying “compromise between Daoist and Legalist schools” (道法折衷 *Daofa Zhezhong*) to express the key principles of the four unidentified texts.[15] Calling the text Dao-Legalist or a compromise between the two schools is a more cautious approach, which shows us that there is yet a great deal to be explored in the *Huangdi Sijing* text. To summarize, even if we do claim that the *Huangdi Sijing* is a Huang-Lao text, the first thing we must do is still to make a thorough analysis of its content to confirm its Huang-Lao characteristics, which is what this paper attempts to do by examining the aspect of Naming.

Above I have pointed out that in the *Huangdi Sijing*, in the "Jingfa" section, Dao, Names and Legality form a three-way structure of key concepts; which can be used to summarize the principle structure of ideas in the text.

Although these are not the only three concepts appearing in the *Huangdi Sijing*, not all the others that we see are equally important, and moreover, these ideas are not to be seen as exclusive or entirely independent from one another. For example, the term Heaven and the related terms of the Way of Heaven or of Heaven and Earth (*Tian zhi dao* 天之道 and *Tiandi zhi dao* 天地之道), as well as Spirit (*Shen*神), Brightness (*Ming*明), *Emptiness* (Xu虛), Quietness/Stillness (*Jing*靜), Unadorned Plainness (*Su*素) and so on should all be interpreted in relation to Dao. Punishment, Rule by Punishment and by (rectifying) Names are in some instances related to the meaning/idea of Law (*Fa* 法), but in most cases are related to the idea of Naming. These three concepts of Dao, Names and Legality are also interrelated; depending on the situation they may be drawn together in one of two different ways. Firstly, this may be as three corners of a triangle, wherein Dao occupies the top of the pyramid, as the highest principle and origin, and Names and Law occupy two corners at the foot of the pyramid as mutually equal offshoots of Dao, which is the basis of their existence. In other situations, the three appear in a straight line, where Dao is the origin, and Names acts as an intermediate point between Dao and Law, with Law as the final aim and means. In the *Huangdi Sijing*, these three concepts are interrelated and interactive, and each is essential to the whole. Although Dao is the highest principle, it is not always the focus of argumentation; for example, the majority of scholars prioritize the first sentence of the "Daofa" chapter ("Dao generates Law" 道生法), but the whole chapter contains only this one phrase with reference to the relationship between Dao and Law, and this point is not expanded on in the original text , as if it were an obvious precept not requiring any further explanation.

The three other sections in the *Huangdi Sijing* make no further reference to the topic, which is worth consideration. In the "Jingfa" chapter in particular it seems the author is primarily concerned with describing how the ruler might use Names and Law to rule. The progression from Dao to Law is impossible without the intermediate step of Names, so that we can only hope to understand the relationship between the two by making an in-depth investigation Names.

Up to the present day, most scholars in their analysis of the *Huangdi Sijing* have adopted a similar approach to that of Wang Bo 王博, who discusses the concepts of Dao, or the Dao or Way of Heaven,[16] Law, Rule by Punishment or Naming amongst others. We might look

for example to the epilogue of Wang Bo's *The Characteristics of the Thought of Laozi the Historian* , entitled "Research into the Unidentified Text Preceding the Laozi B from Mawangdui." Haga Yoshinobu in his paper "The Forms of Thought Related to Punishment and Naming in the 'Jingfa' Text" thoroughly addresses the relationships between the concepts of Punishment, Names, Dao, Heaven, Principles and Law as they appear in that text.[17] Jiang Lequn 蔣樂群, in his paper "A Study of the Terms Tianyang (天殃), Tiandao (天道) and De Tian (得天) in the Silk Manuscript 'Jingfa'" looks specifically at concepts related to Heaven.[18] Although in each of these papers there are points we can draw upon, the flaw that they share is that they do not focus sufficiently on the organic relationship between the three key concepts; they especially lack treatment of the concept of Names and Naming, their status and meaning, which is where this paper will focus its attention.

The first order of business is for us to examine the meaning of the concept of Naming and its related concepts. I feel that we can identify the following general aspects:

The examples given above are similar, with the clearest and most detailed examples coming from the "Daoyuan" chapter. The examples from "Jingfa": " Mingli" and "Shiliu Jing": "Xingshou" are condensed versions compared to what we see in "Daoyuan." In the *Huangdi Sijing*, the nameless and formless are expressions of the forms that Dao takes. Compared to that, names and forms are the crux of discussion. At the beginning of the "Cheng" section we see the passage:

> Dao has no time of beginning; however it can correspond to the myriad beings. If the myriad beings do not have a time they emerge, then they cannot correspond. After the myriad beings emerge, they adjust to the myriad beings. When a being is about to emerge, its form is the first to emerge. First the form of the being is fixed; afterwards it is given a name.
>
> The way to know and grasp the world lies in taking the attitude of the emptiness of material existence; if one adopts this attitude then he knows that even a small thing must have its form and name. The form and name of things are established, then the "distinction between black and white," as well as the natural characteristics of the things, their certain positions, and the criterion of right and wrong are also established.

Here we see that compared with the "yet to be," the author

appears more concerned with the "already existent," the actions described as "after the coming of things"; "their forms are established, their names are named," which are clearly human actions, whilst establishing forms and names is to give an object its certain and correct position. This tendency is also apparent in "Jingfa": "Daofa."

That is to say, the world we recognize is so because of an empty and vacuous state, and by adopting that state, one might recognize that even the smallest of things has a form and a name. With these established correctly, "the distinction between black and white (dark and light) is possible"; that is the types of things, their correct position and the standards of right and wrong are all established. In the *Huangdi Sijing*, each piece of argumentation appears to begin with the Dao, but in fact begins with Names, a point that will become clear in the latter section of this paper.

> The way to know and grasp the world lies in taking the attitude of emptiness of existence; if one adopts this attitude then one knows that even a small thing must have its form and name. The form and name of things are established, then the "distinction between black and white" as well as the natural characteristics of the things, their certain position, and the criterion of right and wrong is also established. The one who grasps the Dao, while observing the affairs under heaven, only needs to adopt the attitude of "non-grasping," "non-residence," "non-action" and unselfishness. When arriving to the time when there are problems under Heaven, these few forms and names (*xingming* 刑名 correct order and standards), and *shenghao* (聲號 policy and edicts), then one can naturally express his function. One only needs to establish form and names and edicts, then there is no one who can escape from one's control and governance.

This passage means: the Dao of the "seen and known" or the world as we know it, lies in adopting an attitude of emptiness; if this is done, then one knows that even the smallest thing has its form and name. Once these are established, the distinction between black and white (dark and light) is known, as well as the characteristics of things, their position and the standards for right and wrong. A ruler who grasps the Dao, in grasping all things under Heaven, only need adopt the position of non-grasping, non-residence, non-action and unselfishness. When something occurs that needs to be dealt with, these "forms and names" (Punishment and Names, that is the correct order and standards), names, in the sense of policies and imperial edicts, will automatically take effect. As long as the system is established

correctly, no one will be able to escape control and management by the system.

The term “forms and names” *xingming* 刑名 is a compound term. We needn’t understand names and forms as opposite concepts; whether we are dealing with forms or names, we are talking about order, standards and the attitude in keeping with them.[20] The result of establishing a system of forms and names is the distinction between black and white; that is to say that with the position and states of things established, we understand right and wrong.

Only when this has been accomplished, can names, in the sense of policies and edicts, take effect, so that nothing can escape or be beyond the political governance. Here, the distinction between black and white is similar in nature to Law. Hence we see that the law is put into practice only when the prerequisite names are in place. A very similar expression is to be found in the “Jingfa”: “Lunyue” and “Jingfa”: “Mingli” chapters:

> Thus the sage who grasps the Dao, when he observes all under heaven, he definitely needs first of all to examine in detail the origin of things, and investigate thoroughly their form and name. When form and name are defined, whether opposing or complying, dying or living, existing or perishing, flourishing or declining, there is a fixed position and differentiation. Only then refer to the rule of Heaven and Earth, and then one can determine the cause of disaster and happiness, death and life, existence and perishing, prosperity and decline. In this way, the myriad affairs held do not lose their principle and all plans under Heaven will not fail. Thus one is capable to establish the son of Heaven, to install the three dukes, enabling the people to receive indoctrination; this is called “to have Dao.” (“ Jingfa”: “Lunyue”)
>
> Therefore, when the sages who understand the Dao observe the world, they are capable of ensuring the proper way, are capable of abiding by the principle of the things, are capable of defining the right and wrong or good and bad of the things, and are capable of grasping the wholeness of things. Therefore, the sages are capable of abiding by the name of things and inquiring into the principle of things. All things have their own form, all things also have their own name; the name of things and their essential features are to be identical, then the reason for good fortune and calamity, prosperity and decline, can also be grasped. This is the same principle of forms changing and images complying, responses fitting the sounds (names) and measures differentiating between heavy and light. (“Jingfa”: “ Mingli”)

Many scholars when discussing this passage from the “Lunyue”

chapter interpret it in terms of the ideas of the interaction or equability of forms and names, as Li Chenglü 李承律 does in the case of the following passages:

> Thus, the sages who grasp the Dao, while observing all under heaven, he must first of all examine in detail the origin of the things, then he surveys thoroughly their form and name. Once their form and name are defined …. (“Lunyue”)
>
> The ruler who grasps the Dao, when observing the political situation of their kingdom, must see straight through to the original state of things, be correctly aware of forms (the actual state of things) and names (seeing whether names fit their objects). Having judged whether these two are appropriate or not …[21]

There is some logical sense in applying the idea of whether or not forms and names are suitable to interpreting the *Huangdi Sijing*; however in this case it is not entirely appropriate to interpret the character *ding* 定 from the original as “judge” in the phrase “having defined the forms and names” (“刑(形)名已定”). I feel that reading it as “judge,” thus ending up with the sentence: “having judged the forms and names,” is not entirely convincing. Similar expressions are to be found in the “Daofa” chapter, for example “Name and form are defined (*ding* 定), and then the things themselves take the proper course,” and “once forms and names are established (*li* 立), policies are set up, then there is nothing that can escape or hide from its rule.”

In these instances, the characters *ding* 定 and *li* 立 cannot be interpreted as “judge.” In fact, forms and names in these two cases should be interpreted in the sense of rules or standards, two interrelated states. As for the ruler who grasps Dao in the “Lunyue” chapter, the first rule of business is to investigate forms and names and whether or not the forms and names of the things in the kingdom are occupying the correct position and state; in a state of *defining*, one might discover whether objects are in a state of order or disorder, death or life, existence or ceasing to be, flourishing or decreasing. In this way a ruler might be successful in all ventures, might achieve the “establishing [of] the emperor, and the three dukes” and other such essential political activities. As is the case for the ruler who grasps the Dao in the “Mingli” chapter, “sounds” (*sheng* 聲) that we might call edicts or laws, are used to be sure of forms and names, which are then aligned with their actual states (*shi* 實) or actual political acts, to achieve the political effect of extinguishing disasters and giving rise to blessings. Let us look at the next passage:

> There is constancy between Heaven and Earth, there is constancy

in the affairs of the people, and the rankings are constant between the noble and the lowly. Employing officials has a constant method, governing the people has constant rules. The pattern of Heaven and Earth, being constant is: the alteration between the four seasons, the replacement of day and night, the transformation between life and death of the living beings, and the change of objects between hard and soft; the constancy of human affairs is: men plow and women weave; the noble and the lowly have their constant rankings means: the people who have talent and virtue and the people without talent and virtue are not situated in the same position; the constant method of employing officials is: the rank of the official's post has to accord with his ability; the constant rule in governing the people is: to remove selfish desires and to act in a just way. If we alter the rules and laws, then there will arise abnormal affairs surpassing the ordinary; we need to enable the ordinary and abnormal to each go back to their own position, not in such a way as to let them hinder one another, enabling the established rules unlikely to be lost. Regardless of whether the affairs are great or small, the things themselves define their (own) position. The conclusion of the opposites – to oppose or to obey, to live or to die, the beings themselves give them a name. Name and form are defined, and then the things themselves take the proper course. After the place of rule is established, the things can then autonomously situate themselves in the place of rule, and act in the proper way. ("Jingfa": "Daofa")

天地有恆常、萬民有恆事、貴賤有恆立(位)、畜臣有恆道、使民有恆度。天地之恒常: 四時、晦明、生殺、輮(柔)剛; 萬民之恒事:男農、女工; 貴賤之恒立(位): 賢不肖(肖)不相放(妨); 畜臣之恒道:任能毋過亓(其)所長; 使民之恒度: 去私而立公。變恒過度, 以奇相禦。正、奇有立(位),而名〔刑(形)〕[22] 弗去也。凡事無小大, 物自為舍。逆順死生, 物自為名。名刑(形)已定, 物自為正。(《經法•道法》)

The first half of this passage follows a line of thought from the constancy of Heaven and Earth to the constant matters concerning the multitude of people and the constancy of roles in society. It emphasizes that any individual has their own fixed position and role (responsibility) in society, as if the author intends, through a kind of division of roles and labor, illuminate the levels in society and their respective responsibilities, a way of thinking aimed at ensuring that politics are well-ordered and run smoothly. This way of thinking has points of similarity with Legalism and Confucianism in the mid-to-late Warring States period; the expression "the constant method of

employing officials is: the rank of the official's post has to accord with his ability" is particularly close to those found in the *Han Feizi*, a classical work of the Legalist School.

The latter part of the passage enters into the sphere of forms and names: "If we alter the rules and laws, then there will arise abnormal affairs surpassing the ordinary; we need to enable the ordinary and abnormal to each go back to their own position, not in such a way as to let them hinder one another, enabling the position of rule, and the established stance, to be unlikely to go so far as to be lost." In other words, when the "ordinary" (*zheng* 正) set-up of a well-ordered society is damaged, a state of affairs will occur known as "the arousal of abnormal affairs that surpasses the ordinary." In that case, what must be done is to make "ordinary" and the "abnormal" return to their respective "positions" and cease to hinder each other. "Enabling the established rules unlikely to be lost," states that set positions and states cannot be lost.[23]

"The conclusion of the opposites – to oppose or to obey, to live or to die, the things themselves give them a name" means that the objects of discussion, according to their set position and state, make decisions about right and wrong and confirm their own fate. "Name and form are defined, and then the things themselves take the proper course. After the place of rule is established, the things can then autonomously situate themselves in the place of rule, and act in the proper way" has a similar meaning; that the objects can, with their set position and state established, actively choose to remain in the correct position and perform the appropriate actions.

The political ideal of achieving a well-ordered society by having clear divisions of levels in society and a clear division of labor may also be found in such varied texts as the *Xunzi*, *Guanzi*, *Han Feizi* and *Yin Wenzi*. The characteristics of the idea as it appears in the *Huangdi Sijing* are its relation to the notion of forms and names, hence we see that forms and names in this case mean more than simply states and titles in the ordinary sense. In addition, they have a particular meaning; they are the constant forms and constant names that reflect the standards of constancy, constant matters, positions, Dao and standards (*du* 度). Although the *Huangdi Sijing* does not refer directly to "constant names" (恒名), we do see as in the following paragraphs the appearance of the terms "upright names" and "constant forms."

The realization of political ideals depends on the correct establishment of upright names and forms in the first instance, following which the people of the kingdom and their related affairs will act using the upright forms and names as their base point of reference and model of behavior; and thus all things will automatically and naturally enter into their set and correct position.

This is the main point that is addressed in the *Huangdi Sijing*.

From the above passage, we see that there are two important items of content. The first is forms and names, which also sometimes appears reversed as "names and forms." The inversion of the term means that when we read the two as "their set and proper positions" there is no inequality of status between the two. The phrases: "to determine the name of something and to perfect the penalties" (正名修刑) and "to determine the name of something and to implement punishments" (正名施刑) both appear in the "Shiliu Jing": "Guan." From the context in which they appear, both refer to the announcement and carrying out of legal orders, a context in which both "names" and "forms" are alternative expressions for these orders and edicts. In general, we find no evidence that the terms "names" and "forms" in the *Huangdi Sijing* are in any way similar to the usage in the "Da Dao Shang" (大道上) chapter of the *Yinwenzi*: "names are used to define the state of things" (名也者, 正形者也), "names are used to describe the state of things, the state of things reflect their names" (名者, 名形者也。形者, 應名者也); in the "Da Dao Shang," there seems to exist a distinction between the actively decisive and more passive roles of the two terms. The *Huangdi Sijing* seems to have little interest in describing the relationship between them, and so we see no expressions similar to the following examples from the "Da Dao Shang": "There are times when you use the name of the things to examine the situation of the things; there are times that you use the situation of things to verify their names" (名以檢形、形以定名), or "Now in the world every kind of thing (object) already exists; if we do not use a name to differentiate between them, then chaos will occur. In the world today all kinds of names already exist; if we do not use the correct form of things to correlate to the name, then deviation will emerge"(今萬物具存, 不以名正則亂。萬名具列, 不以形應之則乖).

Secondly, owing to the commonality between these two, both being seen as "set positions," in some cases the term "names" can be used to encapsulate the meaning of "names and forms," as we see in the passage above from the "Jingfa", which includes the phrase, "the beings themselves give them a name"(物自為名), or, in the " Shiliu Jing": "Chengfa," the phrases "in order to protect the name" (以守一名) and "to abide by the name of the things, in the end return to the one" (循名复一), and so on. If we compare the following phrase from the "Jingfa": "Mingli":

> When events occur under Heaven, first of all we need to examine their names. Abiding by the names of things, then the result of a deep investigation into the principle of the things will be: the correct inevitably leads to blessings, the mistaken inevitably leads

to disaster.

With the phrase:

> Thus, the sage who grasps the Dao, while observing all under Heaven, he must first examine in detail the origin of the things then thoroughly investigate their form and name. Once form and name are defined, then whether it goes against or complies, dies or lives, exists or perishes, flourishes or declines, is differentiated and categorized. After things are differentiated and categorized, again consult with the rule of Heaven and Earth; one can then determine the cause for disaster and happiness, life and death, existence and perishing, prosperity and decline.

in the "Jingfa": "Lunyue", we see even more clearly that the process of surveying names (*shen ming* 審名) is in fact the process of surveying both names and forms; with names properly established, the standards for judging of right and wrong are also established. To continue with our list of the uses of names, let us look at number four:

> 4. Employing names to express roles. The meaning of this type of name is in fact an extension of the ideas of "rules" and "standards" only in a more specific sense.
>
> Employ the people's status to define the position the people should have; in this way dispute will not occur among the people. Taking the name of things to confer to the myriad beings, the myriad beings then can manage themselves. Not forgetting oneself due to the existing administration by the government, and not being at loss because the country breaks out in chaos. ("Daoyuan")

This passage is extremely like those that we have quoted from "Jingfa": "Daofa." In this case, the term "name" appears in contrast to that of "divisions" (*fen* 分), showing quite clearly that here names refer to one's title and role. However, there are very few examples of this kind of usage in the *Huangdi Sijing*, unlike the *Lüshi Chunqiu*'s "Shenfen" chapter, which states:

> The ruler who grasps the Dao, he has reins to manage the state officials and subjects. What are his reins? They are determining and rectifying names, noting clearly the duties; these are reins of governing the officials and people. Therefore, in accordance with practice, examine the names of things, so that you can try to grasp the real situation. When hearing the expression of opinions, desire to inspect the actions taken, do not allow words and reality

to have conflict between them. When there are many names that are not in line with reality, many of the affairs conducted do not suit the practice. Therefore, the ruler must elucidate the status of the people. Not elucidating the status of people is a very bad situation.

This kind of description of surveying and thus rectifying names, as we will point out next, does not appear in the *Huangdi Sijing* because the text is not one concerned with the techniques of employing one's ministers.

According to our analysis of the meanings of the character *ming* or "names," we see that in the *Huangdi Sijing*, the term "names" is similar to the idea of "law" or "legality" (*fa* 法), and both can be associated with the idea of order or principles. In the past I have made an analysis of the term *fa* in the "Jingfa" chapter, which leads me to conclude that in that chapter, the term *fa* has two major meanings: the first being natural principles for the consultation of rulers; for example the movements of Heaven and Earth, the four seasons and other natural principles such as the inked plumb line [an Ancient Chinese method of measurement], feet and inches, scales, measures of capacity and other such standards. The other sort is man-made, the swiftly effective means that the ruler hopes to employ in political circumstances such as policies, measures, edicts and orders.[24] Regardless of which sort, both refer to objective, absolute, certain and effective rules. Obviously, names have similar attributes, hence names and law are extremely commonly seen in the *Huangdi Sijing*.

In many instances names are a concept seen in parallel with law, an observation I explored in chapter four titled: *The Relationship between Ming and Fa*, and in my doctoral thesis, "History of Ming Political Thought in Ancient China."[25]

What exactly is, then, the relationship between names and law in the *Huangdi Sijing*? And why does the author choose to discuss both as ideas connected to rules? What are their effects and what different roles do they fulfill? These questions, which have been largely overlooked, will be answered and concentrated upon in section four of this chapter, "The Relationship between Names and Law."

3 Surveying Names (審名) in the *Huangdi Sijing*

Although we do not see a direct reference to "the comparability of forms and names" in the *Huangdi Sijing*, this idea was once broadly

employed to explain the idea of names in the text . There are two tendencies in such a method; the first may be seen in Yu 1 and Yu 2,[26] whereby all instances of forms and names in the *Huangdi Sijing* are seen as the Means of Forms and Names by which the ruler appoints his ministers to "expect reality to correspond to names." I call this the narrow sense of "the comparability of forms and names," whereas there is a wider sense in which the idea may be perceived. We will first analyze the first, narrow sense of the idea.

As we all know, the narrow sense of "the comparability of forms and names" is presented in its most typical form in the *Hanfeizi*. The "Zhudao" chapter (主道), for example, says:

> Dao is the origin of the myriad beings, the standard for right and wrong. Thus the wise ruler grasps the origin in order to understand where the myriad things come from, and investigates the standard to comprehend the cause for success or failure. Therefore, treat everything in emptiness and calmness, allow the names to display their function, enable the matters to unfold on their own. Empty, one can then know the actual situation of the matter; calm, one can then know the standard for action. The one who puts forward this suggestion can form a proposition on his own, the one who handles affairs can form results on his own, inspect and verify if the results and propositions conform; the ruler can then have nothing to do, but rather allow the actuality of the things to emerge on their own.

Obviously, names in this case refer to the words of the ministers, and forms refer to the affairs of the ministers. The ruler must test the ministers' words and compare them to their actions. The " Yangquan" (揚權) chapter says:

> The method for applying the Dao is to take the defined name and place it in the beginning. When the names are appropriate, the things can then be determined; if the names are biased, the things will deform. Therefore the sage stands in the position of Dao and de-virtue, adopts an approach of being empty and calm, allowing the names to exhibit their own function, allowing the things to define themselves. The noble ruler does not desire to reveal his likes and dislikes; the people underneath him manage their affairs seriously. Make appointments according to the personal strengths of the officials, and this will enable them to handle affairs on their own; give assignments according to the personal strength of the officials and they will be able to accomplish them on their own; arrange them in an appropriate manner that will enable them to automatically be responsible and diligent. The ruler

> manages the people according to the official's proposition, if it is unclear whether the proposition offered by the official is appropriate or not, the ruler then inspects his actions. The ruler decides whether the official's words and actions match and accordingly rewards or punishes.

In the passage below rectified names and disjointed names come very close to expressions found in the *Huangdi Sijing*. However, in the same chapter we also see:

> The way of the ruler and the way of the minister are not the same, the minister appeals to the ruler with propositions. The ruler applies the propositions of the minister and the minister then contributes a certain contribution. If the contribution and the proposition conform and match, then the relationship between the ruler and ministers is harmonized.

And so we see that the techniques of "the comparability of forms and names" are entirely restricted to use between ruler and minister. "The comparability of forms and names" is basically "expecting reality to correspond to names," where the ruler, believing in the principle of oneness and consistency between names and reality , achieves a real effect through holding ministers to be accountable for their words or their positions.[27]

We see many references to "corresponding to names" in the *Huangdi Sijing*; as we have so far confirmed, names in this sense are basically representing set positions and states, and have a broad meaning, rather than the narrow sense of a ruler-minister technique. In the " Jingfa" chapter, we see reference to the Techniques of Kings (*wang shu* 王術); for example the " Liufen" section of the "Jingfa" states:

> Those who do not understand the methods of government have no way to govern all under Heaven. Those who do understand the methods of government, even if they are fond of horse-racing and hunting, they can moderate (themselves), even if they are fond of banquets, they are unlikely to absorb in them, they are fond of treasures and beautiful women, but their heart will not fall to disorder. Even if a war under Heaven is launched, they will also exert themselves less but accomplish more.

So we may see that this type of technique is not merely restricted to the relationship between ruler and minister.

As stated above, in the *Huangdi Sijing*, names and forms often appear side by side; hence there is no great discrepancy in their

meaning, the author of the text rarely emphasizes a difference in status in their relationship to each other, and both can be seen as "set positions, appropriate states." Hence I have found no evidence to persuade me that "names and forms" means actual names and physical forms; words and actions, words spoken before action and the effects of those actions; or one's ministerial responsibilities and effectual acts; nor am I convinced that names and forms exist to be judged on whether they are opposed or in agreement, in an act of "the comparability of forms and names," to be used as a political management tool or rulership technique. In the "*Jingfa*" section we also see examples of names and reality (*ming shi* 名實) appearing together, but they are few and far between. For example, the "Sidu" chapter says:

> Beauty and ugliness each have their own names, to go against and to obey each have their own form, true and false each have their actual situation.

Which seems to suggest that if we are able to grasp the names, forms and realities of the beautiful and the ugly, of going against and going along with, of true emotions and false ones, then kings and dukes can rectify the kingdom. Here true and false emotions or truth and falsity may be read in conjunction with beauty and ugliness, going with or against, and so reality appears opposite forms and names, with forms and names as meanings on one level. We can see that firstly, here there is no clear difference in status between names and forms; secondly, there is a reciprocal relationship between reality, and names and forms, one which has nothing in common with the idea of using one to ascertain the reality of the other.

In the "Lun" chapter we also see the terms "names" and "reality" appearing together, but here again this bears no relation to the idea of the comparability of forms and names:

> (When) names and reality correspond then (everything) can be settled, (when) names and reality do not correspond then disputes (will arise). The beings may correct themselves, names may voluntarily establish their function, and affairs will then ensure themselves. Clarify the three types of names, then one can know well the true situation of things and not be confused.
> 名實不相應則定, 名實不相應則靜(爭)。勿(物)自正也, 名自命也, 事自定也。三名察則盡知請(情)偽而〔不〕惑矣。[28]

This passage appears to employ a means of expression similar in some ways to the passages we have quoted above from the *Hanfeizi*, namely the chapters " Zhudao" and "Yangquan." However, the "Lun"

chapter of the *Huangdi Sijing* states that the entirety of political activities performed by the ruler must be performed in accordance with the Dao of Heaven and Earth and the four seasons; the chapter also makes reference to the topic of going with or against, and life or death of the kingdom as a whole, but seems barely to touch upon the subject of the relationship between ruler and minister.[29] Hence in this case "names" and "reality" ought to be read as "reputation" and "actual efficacy." There are two passages in the "Sidu" chapter that are also helpful in our interpreting names and reality:

> Do not make an empty show of strength, as it will give you a false reputation, if the reputation exceeds reality, the result will be the contrary to your reputation.
>
> When reputation and reality correspond with each other, one can then rule with prosperity for a long time. When reputation and reality do not correspond to each other and reputation exceeds reality, this is called losing the Dao.

The first passage says that one should not do things that go against one's reputation. If one's reputation exceeds the reality of one's ability, the result will certainly be the destruction of one's name (reputation). The second passage offers an even clearer expression, that reality and merits are reciprocal; if one's reputation exceeds one's actual merits, the result is a loss of Dao.

Now let us address the second, broader sense of "the comparability of forms and names." Some scholars believe that there exists in the *Huangdi Sijing* "the comparability of forms and names" in a sense that goes beyond the ruler–minister scale.[30] Namely this means that the one who grasps the Dao, at the point of surveying names, when perceiving the kingdom, does so by observing whether the object, i.e. the accordance of names and realities with each other is his principle of judgment. That is to say, the surveying of names is a means of observation that affects the future of the kingdom, deciding whether it will prosper or fail. "Rectified names" refers to the situation when the state of the ruler, and the set positions and states that he dispenses, are in accordance with each other; otherwise the state is referred to as "disjointed names." According to whether an object is in the former or latter state, the prospects of the kingdom may be divined, and this decides whether a response of reward or punishment should be employed. Therefore, although we do not often see reference to the terms "forms" and "names," the methods employed by the ruler in comparing forms and names is similar.

I agree with this understanding for the most part (or am in basic agreement). At this point I would like to analyze what is specifically meant by the survey of names and forms performed by the ruler (or

the “Dao grasper”), and make a closer investigation into how the ruler goes about the thought processes of the comparability of forms and names, or observing whether or not objects are in accordance with their forms and names. If so, the name is rectified and a state of order is achieved; if not the name is disjointed and affairs are in a state of disorder. The worst state is one of having no name (*wuming* 无名) which refers not to the as-yet-nameless state preceding the creation of things, but in this case to having lost the name and form that one had formerly laid claim to.

> There are three kinds of “names”: one is “proper names,” these are situated in a proper position and are moreover stable; the second is “non-proper names,” they cannot be situated in a proper position and are moreover in confusion; the third type refers to losing one’s name. If you understand the three types of names then you can accomplish everything successfully. (“Jingfa”: “Lun”)
>
> When a person’s status receives the proper definition, the state can be governed, when not receiving the proper definition the state will be in disorder. The proper status is not crooked; the crooked status cannot be established. (“Shiliu Jing”: “ Qiandao”)

As we have pointed out above, the various texts that are referred to as chapters of the *Huangdi Sijing* are independent texts. One reason for holding this view is the different characteristics in writing style; the written style of the “Jingfa” chapter is particularly eye-catching. In taking a full view of the political situation and grasping the pros and cons of the situation, neat numbers are used to sum up; the author also likes to use the phrase, “this is called” and other such categorical statements to present their judgments and offer conclusions. We might present a few examples:

> Through inspection of the situation of all the states we can notice the phenomenon of the “six oppositions.” If the child acts on behalf of the father, the minister on behalf of the ruler, then even if the state is great and strong it will not be able to be ruled. If the imperial strategic advisor holds the power, the state will not be able to be stable, if the ruler is not aware, the state will then perish. If the ruler is not in his position, the state will lose its center, however if the ministers do not lose their position, the state then can keep its foundation, although the state has disasters, it can yet maintain its existence. If the ruler loses his position, the state will then perish, if the ministers lose their position, there is no way to implement government edicts, this kind of state is known as a state in decline. If the ruler is

ambiguous, the state will lose its clarity. If women (the empress) fight men (the ruler) for power, then there will be domestic internal disorder and civil war will take place. This kind of state is known as a vanquished state. (“Jingfa”: “Liufen”)

凡觀國, 有六逆。亓(其)子父, 亓(其)臣主, 雖強大不王。亓(其)臣[31]謀臣在外立(位)者, 亓(其)國不安, 亓(其)主不[illegible](悟)則社稷殘。亓(其)主失立(位)則國無本, 臣不失處(處)則下有根, 〔國〕憂而存。主失立(位)則國芒(亡), 臣失處(處)則令不行,此之胃(謂)[illegible]頖(類)國。主兩則失亓(其)明, 男女掙(爭)威, 國有乳(亂)兵, 此胃(謂)亡國。(《六分》篇)

If the ruler and minister exchange positions with each other this is known as rebellion, when sages and the unworthy are treated equally this is known as disorder, running counter to the times for farming and resting is known as “going against,” the state that suppresses by armed force what should not be suppressed by armed force and yields to states that should not exist to continue to exist, this is known as violence. Rebellion means to lose the fundamental root maintained by the state, disorder means to lose the respective duties of ministers and subjects, to run counter to means to lose the course of time (in agriculture), violence means to lose all subjects. To lose the fundamental root maintained by the state means the state will suffer damage. When the ministers and subjects lose their personal duties the state will be violated, losing the course of time (in agriculture) means that there will be crop failure and famine, the subjects will flee and the state will lose its health. (“Jingfa”: “ Sidu”)

Regarding the matter of the six oppositions in the “ Liufen” chapter, taking the first (going against father or ruler) as an example, we may see how this phenomenon is analyzed and judged later in the text :

If the son takes the father’s place and the minister takes the ruler’s place, even if the state is strong and vast it will not be able to be ruled, when a son takes the father’s place it can be called the “highest defiance”(*shangfei* 上曊), when the phenomenon of a minister taking the place of the ruler occurs, this may be called “blocking obstruction” (*yongsai* 雍塞)→a strong state may lose its land, a mediocre state may lose in war, a small state may be led to subjugation.(“Liufen”)

If the state of the son going against his father and the minister going against his ruler exists in reality, we can say that the ruler might be powerful but that he is not ruling

As is expressed in: “when a son takes the father’s place it can be called highest defiance, when the phenomenon of a minister taking the place of the ruler occurs, this may be called blocking obstruction. A strong state may lose its land, a mediocre state may lose in war, a small state may be led to subjugation.”

We can imagine that in the case of highest defiance, several ministers might engender the idea of leaving the country en masse. If the states of highest defiance and blocking obstruction occur, a strong country might lose its land, a middling country might lose in battle, a lesser country might see its kingdom destroyed. Very clearly, highest defiance and blocking obstruction are named in reference to set positions and states as disjointed names. Because they are disjointed names, we can imagine the ministers leaving en masse and the various detrimental results for countries of varying power.

Therefore the ruler, according to the principle of accordance between names and reality, observes various political situations and derives names for them such as *shangfei* and *yongsai*, and then according to the certain result of such objects, takes effective action. This is what is referred to in the “ Jingfa”: “Daofa” chapter as “Only with forms and names (positions and order) and government edicts a system is established, then there is not one who can escape its control.”

The “four measures” are the topic of the chapter by the same title. There are two tendencies, known as good and bad. Here we will examine the processes by which bad takes place.

> The position of the sovereign and minister is reversed → this is called betrayal → to betray means to lose the root → losing the root may bring about damage.
>
> Good and bad people are treated the same → this is called disorder → disorder means not to fulfill obligations → not to fulfill obligations means infringement
>
> To violate the proper farming times causes the people to serve in forced labor → this is called opposition → to oppose means to lose heaven’s blessings → losing heaven’s blessings means crop failure and famine.
>
> To casually give rewards or abuse punishments → this is called cruelty → through cruelty one can lose the support of the people → losing the support of the people means that problems will arise.

This is an exceptionally clear and powerfully logical means of expression. It first describes the political phenomena (the usual state and non-usual state), then by stating what “this is known as,” offers

judgments on the rectitude or otherwise of names, and finally makes predictions as to the certain results and events yet to occur. The four measures takes on a similar means of expression as the six oppositions; there is also the five oppositions in the “ Guoci” chapter, and in the “ Liufen” chapter, as well as the six oppositions there are also six obediences laid out; the “ Wanglun” chapter describes six dangers, three innocences, three blockages, three violences and so on. The author of the texts presents the crucial aspects of political life in numbered lists and finely defined categories, and then makes judgments and predictions based on these in turn. The means of expressing these judgments in the “Liufen” is to use the formulaic phrase, “it is named so” (*ming yue* 命曰); the “Guoci” chapter uses the phrases “so it is called,” or “this is called so”; “Sidu” uses “call it so”; and the “Lun,” “Wanglun” and “Lunyue” chapters employ a combination of the above.

The “Sidu” chapter says: “observe the four key problems, then you can rule all under Heaven and secure a state” (審知四度, 可以定天下, 可安一國). According to the “Liufen” chapter:

> The ruler, according to six situations of violation and six ordinary situations, domestically engages in reward and punishment and externally in war … therefore he can rule all under Heaven.
> “主上者執六分以生殺, 以賞〔伐〕,[32] 以必伐。……故王天。”[33]

We see that the content of these numerical expressions is precisely concerned with the wise ruler who surveys the names and examines the forms. From the large number of characters expressing statements of judgment, we see that the activity of surveying names pervades the “Jingfa” section in its entirety.

Finally, we will attempt to employ the example found in the “Lunyue” chapter to infer how the sage ruler employs the act of surveying names to explain the principles of politics and engage in political activities.

> Step 1: “The one who grasps the Dao, when he observes all under heaven, he definitely first of all examines the details of the origin of the things and then investigates their form and name.”
>
> That is, observing the object’s form and name and whether or not the position is appropriate.
>
> Step 2: “When form and name are defined, whether oppose or obey, die or live, exist or perish, flourish or decline, all have a position and a partition.”
>
> By confirming the form and name of the object, we see the final result of the object.

> Step 3: “After you once again consult the rule of Heaven and Earth, you can then determine where the root of disaster and happiness, life and death, existence and perishing, prosperity and decline is located.”

If the wise ruler wants to take further steps, that would be to apply reward or punishment according to the name of the object.

This kind of surveying of names is “the comparability of forms and names” in the broader sense. Although there is essentially no problem with this, it makes it easy to overexplain the meaning of forms and names in the *Huangdi Sijing*. In the classical sense, “the comparability of forms and names” names takes the primary role and forms an ancillary one, names control forms, forms must be appropriate to names. I have pointed out above that in the *Huangdi Sijing* “forms and names” also appears written as “names and forms”; they can appear side by side as equals, and they both refer to set positions and appropriate states. This is why the *Huangdi Sijing* can speak both of rectified names and constant forms. For example, the Zhengluan section of the “Shiliu Jing” states:

> The Yellow Emperor said: “I request everyone to respect and abide by the rectified names (the political system) I established, do not forfeit the constant law (edicts) I set up, and furthermore make it an example for later generations.”

Clearly rectified names and constant forms both have the similar meaning of inference. To interpret these two as the clearly differing-in-status “forms and names” as seen in the *Hanfeizi*, without bothering to make the distinctions between them clear, is to make a very stuck-in-the-mud interpretation indeed.

The above discussion also explains why names in the *Huangdi Sijing* should very rarely be interpreted as roles, because this relies on the narrow sense of forms and names, whereas in the *Huangdi Sijing* this is not the narrow sense that is being appealed to.

4 The Relationship Between Ruler and Names

In the *Huangdi Sijing* there are many different appellations for the ruler, such as The One Who Grasps the Dao, Sage Persons, Sage Kings, the Gentleman (sovereign), The Ruler, The Ruler of People, The Ruler Above, He Who Lords over the Kingdom, The Imperial King, The King-Duke, The Emperor, the King and The Hegemon; for the most part these are chosen to fit the context of the section of text being composed. The reason we have chosen “The One Who Grasps the Dao” as the general title of the ruler is because this title seems to efficiently

explain the concepts of Dao, Names and Law and the relationship between them. For such a ruler, Dao has three layers of meaning: firstly, Dao is the source of understanding and basis for existence;[34] secondly, they who grasp the Dao must adopt a state of "no form (formlessness)" in accordance with Dao in order to grasp the "named" and "formed" objects, thus finally achieving the realm of non-action; thirdly, the Dao which exists in the principles governing the movement of Heaven and Earth and the Four Seasons, are/is the principle that they who grasp the Dao must observe and act in accordance with. This chapter will focus primarily on the idea of Names, and so will be mainly concerned with the second meaning of Dao.

From the passages quoted in the previous section we can clearly see that the main, and crucial political duty of they who grasp the Dao is to survey the names and examine the forms, being certain of whether things are in a state of rectified or disjointed names. In the execution of this work, they who grasp the Dao must, in accordance with the order by which Dao gives birth to the ten thousand things, stand firmly on the position of being formless, from this standpoint surveying the formless and nameless. Clearly, in the performance of political operations the "formless" and " nameless" indicate those things that are without a system or order. From the position of the formless and nameless the named and formed are established, indicating those things that are ordered and principled. We might look for example at the following passage from the "Cheng" chapter:

> Dao has no beginning time, but it can correspond to the myriad beings. The myriad beings have no time of emergence, and they do not correspond. After the myriad beings emerge, the Dao then conforms to the myriad beings. When a thing is about to emerge, its form (shape) first emerges. First of all its form is defined, after that it is given a name.

This passage describes the process on which the system of forms and names is built according to the Dao. As the passage says: "First of all its form is defined, after that a name is used to call it by a name"; the establishing of forms and names is a human activity, but it is not an activity that any and every person may perform. The "Daoyuan" section says that because of the existence of Dao: "All beings attain life through Dao and all things are completed through Dao."

But:

> People all rely on Dao but do not know the name of it, all people use Dao but do not know its form

Only the Sage Person can hope to achieve this result.[35] Hence I support the observation of Wang Bo 王博, who interprets the phrase: "First of all define the shape/form of the things and after that use a name to call it" as "the act of the sage person establishing types and standards."[36]

Next let us look at a passage from the "Guan" chapter of the "Shiliu Jing," where the author borrows the name of the Yellow Emperor to describe the actual process of the emergence of Names:

> The Yellow Emperor commanded the chancellor Li Hei to hide his identity by wearing plain clothes in order to go out to investigate, inspect all surrounding states to see if there are regions that do not keep the rules, in order to formulate the code of conduct. Li Hei examined in detail every kind of phenomenon of things, in places where he saw bad (deeds) he applied penalties and in places he saw good he bestowed rewards … Li Hei had already issued various kinds of regulation systems, he said: "heaven and earth are already formed, the people already came into being, but there is not yet the criterion of right and wrong and good and evil, there is not yet a regulation of reward and punishment, there is not yet the pattern of when farmers should rest and when they should plow, the statuses of noble and lowly are not yet fixed. I now desire to have a criterion of right and wrong and good and evil, a regulation of reward and punishment, a pattern for farmers to rest and plow, and fixed statuses for the noble and lowly, thereby becoming the model for all under Heaven, thereby restricting the actions of humans, how can I do this well?"
>
> 〔黃帝〕令力黑浸行伏匿, 周留(流)四國, 以觀無恒, 善之法則[37], 力黑視象(像), 見黑則黑, 見白則白。……力黑已布制建極, □□□□曰:"天地已成, 而民生, 逆順無紀, 德癘(虐)無刑, 靜作無時, 先後無命名[38]。今吾欲得逆順之〔紀〕,□□□□□□□[39]以為天下正, 靜作之時, 因而勒之, 為之若何?

The emphasis in this passage is on human society, describing how the Yellow Emperor commands his minister, Li Hei, to observe the disorder of the kingdom, and then to "issue various kinds of regulation systems"; that is the process of establishing a system of standards. The characteristics of early human society are in their inconstancy and lack of political order, described in this passage as: "there is not yet the criterion for good and evil and right and wrong, then there is no standard for rewards and punishments, when there is yet the pattern for when to plow and when to rest, the statuses of the noble and lowly are yet to be determined," whilst the process of establishing order is: "in places he saw bad he applied punishments, in places he saw good he applied rewards." In the "Jingfa" chapter's "Daofa" section we see

the phrase: “Once the forms and names of things are defined, then ‘the division between black and white’ as well as the characteristics of things, their defined position, the criterion of right and wrong, are all established,” hence we may know that “in places he saw bad he applied punishments, in places he saw good he applied rewards” means exactly the correct establishing of forms and names, the confirmation of appropriate positions and the characteristics of each object.

With the system of Names (or forms and names) correctly established, and maintaining the state of rectified names, then they who grasp the Dao can simply allow the effects of the system to take effect, and thereby achieve a state of non-action.

> No matter if the affairs are big or small, the things themselves can define their position. Whether they oppose, obey, die, or live, the beings themselves give them names. After the position of regulations is established, the beings can then spontaneously locate themselves in the position of regulations and issue proper action. (“Jingfa”: “Daofa”)
>
> When there are affairs under Heaven, these few forms and names (acting as a fixed order or regulation) and government edicts and policies, they can exhibit their own function. As long as the system of laws and policies are established, then there is no one who can escape from its control and administration. (“Jingfa”: “Daofa”)
>
> The myriad things can manage themselves; names can spontaneously/on their own exhibit their own function; the things can stabilize themselves. (“Jingfa”: “Lun”)
>
> If you want to know the reason for gains and losses/success and failure and disaster and happiness and true or false, then you must examine the forms and names of things. All matters under Heaven will ensure themselves, therefore I want even more to maintain peacefulness; all matters under Heaven follow the rhythm of their own course, therefore I only maintain non-action. (“Shiliu Jing”)
>
> 欲知得失請(情)〔偽〕, 必審名察刑(形)。刑(形)恒自定, 是我俞(愈)靜。事恒自施, 是我無為。(《十六經》)[40, 41]

Comparable references to the rectitude or disjointedness of names, and the idea that “the myriad things can manage themselves; names can exhibit their own function; the things can stabilize themselves” also appear in other historic texts , but we find that they are in nearly all cases connected with the Daoist tradition of thought. For example the “Baixin” chapter of the *Guanzi*, the “Zhudao” and “Yangquan” chapters of the *Hanfeizi* and are all texts that are widely accepted to

be closely related to Daoist thought. In their argumentation, the emphasis of these texts differs somewhat from the *Huangdi Sijiing*; however, in the structure that takes Dao as the starting point and Names as a crucial political aim of the ruler, the two sets of texts are similar. We might look at the following quotations:

> Therefore, when the sage rules the world, his body is tranquil. When affairs appear they rely on their own name to manage themselves. Precise names will naturally bring about good governance; imprecise names will naturally lead to elimination. Only if names are precise and the laws are complete, the sage can sit peacefully and do nothing. (*Guanzi*: "Baixin ")
>
> 是以聖人之治也, 靜身以待之, 物至而名自治之。正名自治之, 奇身名廢。名正法備, 則聖人無事。(《管子•白心》)[42 , 43]
>
> Dao is the origin of the myriad beings and the criterion for right and wrong. As a result, the wise sovereign grasps the origin to comprehend the source of the myriad beings, examines the criterion to comprehend the cause for success or failure. Therefore, he treats everything in calm nothingness/emptiness, allowing the names to exhibit their own function and allowing the things to decide and determine for themselves. (*Hanfeizi*: " Zhudao")
>
> The method for employing the Dao is to first define the names. When the names are proper, things are able to ensure; if the names are biased then things will deform. Therefore when the sage that holds the Dao adopts an empty and calm attitude, he enables the names to exhibit their own function, and enables the things to define themselves. (*Hanfeizi*: " Yangquan")
>
> 用一之道, 以名為首。名正物定, 名倚物徙。故聖人執一以靜, 使名自命, 令事自定。(《韓非子•揚權》)[44]

Although the work of they who grasp the Dao is to "survey the names and examine the forms," the aim of this work is that "the beings correct themselves, the names correspond to reality, and the affairs unfold on their own." However, they who grasp the Dao are not confined by names (a name) themselves; rather they stand forever in a position of formlessness, (or non-action, selflessness). That is to say, they who "give names" (命名) and thereby construct the actual political order, needs must preserve a formless state in accordance with Dao. Only by doing so can the ruler place themselves beyond the political order of the real world, in a position beyond criticism and observation, eternally residing in the optimal status/position for grasping others, and at the same time, able to constantly preserve a high level of observation and efficacy. The *Huangdi Sijing* contains rich and detailed descriptions of this state, by which they who grasp the

Dao may attain a Dao-like state of “empty still and equitable,” and “extremely simple and extremely subtle.”

> To know and to grasp the Dao of the world lies in the person who adopts the approach of stillness and emptiness and resides in the realm of non-material existence. (“Jingfa”: “Daofa”)
>
> While grasping the affairs under heaven, the one who holds the Dao, desires to adopt the approach of “non-stubbornness,” “not claiming personal credit for achievements,” “non-action,” and “unselfishness.”(“Jingfa”: “Daofa”)
>
> Therefore the one who grasps the Dao is able to perceive the rule of nature moving along its own course, is able to understand the proper boundaries between a ruler and his ministers, and is also able to examine in detail the reason for the beginning and end of the myriad beings, however he does not consider himself as the ruler. Therefore he is capable to attain extreme simplicity and extreme subtleness in the vast formless realm, and then can become the leader of all under heaven. (“Jingfa”: “Daofa”)
>
> Therefore only the one who grasps the Dao can achieve equitable stillness and emptiness, is able to recognize the regular pattern of the beings, and is able to grasp the nature of the principle of the beings. (“Jingfa”: “ Mingli”)
>
> Power leads to awe, awe leads to grace, grace leads to fairness, fairness leads to tranquility, tranquil and then there is peace, peace and then free from worries, free from worries is then simplicity, simplicity can then be subtle, subtle and then is the wondrous function (*shenming*), arriving to *shenming* is the peak, then you can observe all beings and never be confused. If you desire to be a ruler, you have to grasp and guard this Dao. (“Jingfa”: “Lun”)

In more specific terms, they who grasp the Dao must possess an extraordinary ability or potential, called *shenming* (神明), in correspondence with Dao:

> Dao is the origin of *shenming*. *Shenming* resides inside the rule/measure and is seen outside the rule/measure. Residing inside the measure, can be trusted without words. Seen outside the measure, words cannot be changed. Residing within the measure, still and cannot move. Seen outside the measure, moves but cannot transform. Movement and stillness that cannot move, in movement cannot transform, that is called *shen*. *Shenming,* the foundation of observing and knowing all under Heaven. (“ Jingfa”: “ Mingli”)

The above passage is extremely abstract in its expression, and it is difficult to translate it accurately into modern language. There are several translations available; all differ somewhat from each other. I myself translate it as follows, "Dao is the source of *Shenming*. *Shenming* refers to the ability to reside within the Measures (as rules or standards) and yet 'see' (as in grasp) what lies without these Measures." Here, "residing within measures" means commanding trust without resorting to words. "Seeing beyond measures" requires words, but these words are unchanged. The former is taking no actions but preserving stability; the latter is taking actions but not altering them. He who can be in "stillness that cannot move, in movement cannot transform" is called *shen* 神. *Shenming* is the basis upon which he sees all under Heaven. I believe that if we read this passage in light of the conceptual structure of grasping the formed via the formless, we will find a satisfactory understanding. The ideas of residing within and without Measures is expounded upon in the "Mingli" chapter. Within Measure means "can be trusted without words," or the state of obeying principles. Without Measures is the state of common folk who possess no means of grasping their state, which is as yet entirely unordered.

Only he who is *shenming*, that is he who grasps Dao, can straddle these two states: in the former state, he has only to still quietness, and in the latter he establishes rules and maintains their unchanging states through his actions; this is called words and actions. Words may be understood as the names or rules that he who grasps Dao establishes; actions are actions performed on the bases of these names. This interpretation is arrived at not without requiring a certain degree of imagination, however, I feel that it is in keeping with the spirit of the entire text of the "*Jingfa*" chapter.

The idea of grasping the formed and named via the formless and nameless clearly originated from the *Laozi*, which contains such passages as, "the myriad beings under heaven are all generated from existence, existence is generated from nothingness" (Chap. 40) and "nameless is the beginning of the myriad beings, having names is the mother of the myriad beings" (Chap. 1), which pertain to theories of universal creation and are also related to the idea of "act on it when it is not yet present, order it when it is not yet in disorder" (Chap. 64). From the mid-to-late Warring States period onwards, this class of ideas were blended into the tripartite combination of Dao-Names-Law by thinkers and effectively utilized in the realm of politics. Only the Sage Person can move from the realm of Dao to Names and establish political order; this protects the monopoly on power for the ruler in politics. More specifically, only the Sage Person can perceive the forms and names about to emerge from the state of the formless and

nameless, so that he who grasps the Dao controls the essential political capital originating in the Dao, and stands in a position of unassailable and absolute power.

The idea of *shenming* is in fact an embodiment of this extraordinary power.[45]

We must pay attention to the fact that although the *Huangdi Sijing* encourages the idea that he who grasps the Dao must maintain a state of being "empty still and equitable," and "extremely simple and extremely subtle," this is not equivalent to saying that the ruler's "eyes, ears and other sensory organs and rational activity of the heart are not sufficient to rely on" (as in the *Lüshi Chunqiu*: "Renshu") and deliberately embarking on a process of dispelling listening, watching and knowledge; that is to say it is unlike the means of dispensing with ministers that we see described in the *Hanfeizi*, by employing techniques of Law, even though he is limited to his senses, the ruler might yet grasp politics. Although we see he who grasps the Dao, as described in the *Huangdi Sijing*, as non-active, when he is engaged in "surveying the names and examining the forms," we can be sure that he ceases to be non-active.

5 The Relationship Between Names and Law

In the period from mid-to-late Warring States to the Early Han Dynasty, in such works as the *Guanzi*, in the "Yinwenzi" in particular, the terms Names and Law frequently appear side by side and in contrast to each other. For example, in the *Guanzi*, the "Qi Chen Qi Zhu" chapter says: "Law ministers, if the law is broken and the names are breeched, uphold no reputation," meaning that those ministers who have been called Law Ministers employ the ideas of Names and Law in deciding political matters; in this case both Names and Law are seen as political tools to be manipulated. In the *Guanzi* the "Baixin " chapter says: "names are correct and laws are installed, thus the sage has nothing to do"; that is to say, if the ruler wishes to achieve political non-action, the most important thing is the correct establishment and maintenance of Names and Law. In this case Names and Law are not necessarily political rulings; instead the two are seen as the ultimate and essential political principles. In the *Yinwenzi*, Names and Law appear with similar characteristics, for example:

> There are three categories of names, four manifestations of law. The three categories of law are: one is giving things names, such as "square, round, white and black"; the second are names used for criticism and praise, such as "good, evil, noble and lowly"; the third are names that serve as descriptions and evaluations, such as "virtuous, stupid, love and detest and so on." The four

manifestations of law are: one is the permanent unchanging law, such as the relationship between ruler and minister, above and below; the second is the law of indoctrination, such as the good and bad of moral behavior, the sameness and difference of social customs; the third is the law of governing the people, such as rewards for accomplishments and punishment for the guilty; the fourth is the legislation of politics and economy, such as the unification of the administrative norm and the measurements. ("Da Dao Shang")

Good politics is to define names and laws. If names and laws can be applied to govern the state, chaos will not occur among the myriad affairs and beings.

The ruler does not contend in excess speech, but only on account of profiting the regime he must speak. The noble man does not contend in action, but because it profits the occupations/ enterprises, he has no choice but to act. Hence all the words spoken, their contents cannot exceed names, law, authority and methods, all the affairs he engages in, their contents cannot exceed agriculture and military affairs, these are only managing one's own affairs with great effort. ("Da Dao Shang")

So long as one can employ names, law, authority and methods, to rectify and suppress all kinds of brutal phenomenon, then the ruler can relax and do nothing. If the ruler can relax and has no affairs, then he can truly obtain all under Heaven.

In these examples, Names are given shared status with Law; both are seen as the ultimate and essential political principles. Of course, the *Yinwenzi* not only treats these two as rulings or principles with equal of status and meaning; the text also describes their variations of effect and responsibilities. For example, the "Dadaoxia" chapter says:

> Humanness, righteousness, rites, music, names, law, punishment, rewards—these eight, are the methods of the five emperors and three kings to govern the world … Names are used to correct social order, law is used to regulate everyone's actions…Names can be used to correct and put in order the status between seniors and juniors, but they can also cause people to produce a heart of arrogance and humility. Law can be used for unifying society, but it may also cause people to produce a heart of destruction and status.

That is to say that although Names and Law are both connected to the idea of rules and order, their effects are not entirely the same. If we say one has a vertical and the other a horizontal effect, then the horizontal one is Names, which is employed to correctly establish the

ranks of society and the order amongst them. Law is employed to correctly establish the order within these different ranks that they must follow. These two are complementary. I would go further to say, based on this, that the Legalists place a heavier emphasis on the legal aspect which unites and brings equality to the classes, whilst the Confucians are less opposed to the difference in rank, and Huang-Lao thinkers take a combination of the two approaches. The *Yinwenzi* also believes that Names come before Law. As the "Da Dao Shang" chapter states:

> To give a minister rewards or punishments is a matter for the ruler to do. To strictly maintain their duties and to devote their talent is the affair of ministers. On the basis of the quality of the minister's service the ruler decides whether to promote or to expel, therefore there is reward and punishment. The ministers treat their own posts cautiously, therefore they can strictly maintain their duties and devote their talent. The ruler cannot participate in the minister's occupation, and ministers cannot violate the authority of the ruler. Above and below do not violate or intervene in one another's affairs, this is called "rectified names." Names are rectified and edicts implemented, then all is smooth and unhindered.

The statement that "[t]he ruler cannot participate in the minister's occupation, and ministers cannot violate the authority of the ruler […] above and below do not violate or intervene in one another's affairs," refers to the rectitude of names, or in other words set positions and states. "Names are rectified and edicts implemented, then all is smooth and unhindered," means that only with correct Names can Law be carried out smoothly. Therefore, one could say that, logically, Names might be the precursor of Law.

Looking at this relationship in other texts , but especially the *Yinwenzi*, gives us points of comparison and enlightenment when researching the *Huangdi Sijing*. In the *Huangdi Sijing* we find many descriptions of the relationship between Names and Law, so that the questions of what exactly their relationship is, why both are discussed, what their individual and specific functions are, and considering whether both could be seen to read as rules or order, are all questions worth exploring further. First let us look at some examples of Names and Law appearing together in the *Huangdi Sijing*:

> When all under Heaven is in chaos, one must examine and determine the names. The result of the examination of names, then one can know, if the names are proper they will necessarily bring blessing, if they are improper, they will necessarily bring

disaster. Once right and wrong have an explicit differentiation, then one can use the law to apply resolutions. The treatment of affairs demands emptiness that brings cautiousness, everything accords with the law. (“Jingfa” section, “Mingli” chapter)

When there are affairs in the realm, form and names (acting as defined order and norms) and *shenghao* (acting as policies and governmental edicts) will voluntarily display their function. If only the system of form and names (acting as defined order and norms) and *shenghao* (acting as policies and governmental edicts) are set up, then there is no one who can escape its control and management. (“Jingfa”: “ Daofa”)

While in stillness he follows the law, while in movement he abides by names (norms), in this manner it is easy to succeed. If politics is not a common practice in the human world, exceeding the rules causes the loss of honesty; change in the rules violates the normal state of the people. Not only is there no virtue arising to support the people, moreover there is a reckless usage of punishment. If while still he does not follow law and while in movement he does not abide by names (norms), then in the end he will certainly receive punishment. (“Shiliu Jing”: “Xingzheng”)

The Yellow Emperor asked Lihei: “… I venture to ask is there an already fixed law that can regulate the people in the realm?” Lihei said: “There is. Formerly, after Heaven and Earth were created, names and forms were used to settle all under Heaven, regarding both of these as the standard, thereby coming to grasp and observe the great Dao…I heard that there is an already fixed law in the realm, no need to explain much further, just saying one sentence is enough, that is to handle affairs according to names, ultimately according to the principle of Dao, in this way the people are unlikely to break the law and violate discipline.”

黃帝問力黑: “……請問天下有成法可以正民者。”力黑曰: “然。昔天地既成, 正若有名, 合若有刑(形), □以守一名。……吾聞天下成法, 故曰不多, 一言而止, 循名复一, 民無 (亂)紀。”《十六經•成法》[46]

From the point of view of the “ Xingzheng” section of the “Shiliu Jing” chapter—“While in stillness he follows the law, while in movement he abides by names (norms)”—the *Huangdi Sijing*, in some cases, directly places Names and Law side by side, showing no difference in their status. Whilst the “Chengfa” section of the “ Shiliu Jing” says that if one were to encapsulate the notion of Law in one sentence, it would be: “handle affairs according to names, ultimately serving as the foundation of the principle of Dao,” making responding to Names the highest political principle. As we see, Names in the

Huangdi Sijing can mean the effect of standards and rules. We see that Names and Law may appear side by side; both are the ultimate and essential principles of politics.

However, the *Huangdi Sijing* does not expend many words in emphasizing the same-level relationship between Names and Law as standards and rules, nor does the text transparently state that they are political rulings, as we see in the *Yinwenzi* in passages such as: "names can be used to correct the order of ranks between seniors and juniors," and: "law can be used to unify society," where the two appear to crisscross along vertical and horizontal axes. I believe that Names and Law in the *Huangdi Sijing* in their logical relation to each other occupy a temporal first–last axis. As I have pointed out above, Dao-Names-Law are the key concepts of the *Huangdi Sijing* and exist in organic coexistence, with Dao as the highest principle and starting point, and the *raison d'être* of Names and Law. If we place all three along a line, Names would occupy a central position on the line, between Dao and Law as a medium and conversion point; Law is the ultimate ends and means. The complementary relationship of these three means that all are essential to the process. Although Dao is the highest principle, it does not necessarily form the focus of discussion; rather, in the *Huangdi Sijing*, especially in the "Jingfa" section, the idea that he who grasps the Dao first grasps Names and then grasps Law seems to be the focus of the author's attention.

From the opening sentence of the " Jingfa": "Dao generates Law," we see that Law takes from Dao its basis and authority. However the specific details of how Law emerges from Dao are not given in this chapter.[47]

Comparatively speaking, the text focuses more heavily on the relationship between Dao and Names. This point we see clearly from the above discussion: names (or forms and names) are the principles by which he who grasps Dao deals with the ten thousand things, from the standpoint of Dao's formless state, and only he who grasps the Dao can establish the "forms and names," that is right forms and right names, which the common man is unable to do. With the names of the appropriate states for all things established, Law makes its appearance on the stage. Therefore, Law does not appear instantaneously, but must do so through the medium of Names. Or to approach it from the other direction, if one wishes to know from whence Law emerges, one must first discover from whence Names emerge, and to find that out one must go back to the origin of Dao. From Names to Law is the logical order of epistemology, as well as the essential step of political activity. Therefore the "Mingli" section of the "Jingfa" says:

When all under Heaven is in chaos, the ruler must examine and

> determine the names in the realm. The result of the examination of names and reason will be the knowledge of Dao, proper names will bring blessing to the people, and improper names will bring them disaster. Once right and wrong have a clear distinction, then one can make decisions according to law. Affairs need to be treated in still cautiousness, and all is carried out according to law.

And “the sound that is issued by forms and names are verbal commands, verbal commands and concrete actions are integrated” (sounds can be akin to the actions of law), just as these passages state; although they both represent rules and order, from the point of view of emergence, Names is prior to Law. Names establish right and wrong, Law is established once right and wrong have been established. As to the characteristics of the two, Names are akin to system, Law is akin to means. As to their functions, Names are associated with the establishment of standard models, Law with the implementation of those standards.

What are the characteristics that Names and Laws, as associated categories of rules and standards have in common? Why, upon reaching the late Warring States period to Qin-Han dynasties did Names and Law become hot topics? Why do conversations concerning Names and Laws also touch upon the topic of Dao? What is their relationship with the School of Names political thinkers such as the Yinwenzi and Legalists? Such important questions are addressed in my doctoral thesis, Sect. 5,[48] so we will not repeat ourselves here.

Since Names and Law can both represent essential order and principles, the question of who may establish them is of crucial importance; if the ruler cannot achieve this personally, he will lose his monopoly on political power.

In terms of ideas of dictatorship in the mid-to late Warring States period, amongst political theories, Names received a high level of attention and this was no coincidental matter. After the Qin and Han dynasties, as the dictatorship of power became stable, the topic of Names gradually faded from the political stage and its place was taken over by the idea of Law.

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, although Dao, Ming and Fa (or Dao, Names and Law) have a logical order of primacy, they have different functions; however they also share the same aim, that is to ensure that the ruler mounts the peak of dictatorship, which was the case in mid-to-late Warring States period. The “Chengfa” section of the “Shiliu Jing” says: “handle affairs according to names and return to one, the people will

not go against the rules." He who grasps the Dao, in "handling affairs according to names" (循名), has the ultimate motive of making the whole of that which is under Heaven return to One; that is why we see Names and Law raised together side by side, why we see the saying "an extraction of the essence of the schools of Names and Law" (撮名法之要)[49] as the tendency for the realization of Daoist ideas, from the viewpoint of the School of Names ; therefore to call the *Huangdi Sijing* the ultimate result of the mid-Warring States period , is not reasonable.

Footnotes

1

The two longer texts "Jingfa" and "Shiliu Jing" have been separated into smaller Sections.

2

Two different versions of the *Laozi* were excavated from the Mawangdui site, which are generally called *Laozi A* and *Laozi B* (or Laozi 甲 and 乙 in Chinese). On the other piece of silk, approximately 24 cm wide, we find five texts altogether: *Laozi A*, and the texts the *Wuxing* (五行), *Jiuzhu* (九主), *Mingjun* (明君) and *Desheng* (德勝). It is generally accepted that texts written on a whole piece of silk were considered to be relatively important, whereas texts written on a half-size piece of silk were less important.

3

Tang Lan, "A Basic Exploration of the Huangdi Sijing," in Wenwu (1974, vol. 10).

4

Yu Mingguang, *Huangdi Sijing and Huanglao Thought*. Harbin, Heilongjiang People's Press, 1989.

5

Yu Mingguang, *A Modern Commentary and Translation of the Huangdi Sijing*. Hunan: Yuelu Press, 2016.

6

Chen Guying, *A Modern Commentary and Translation of the Huangdi Sijing–Silk Manuscripts Excavated from a Han Tomb at Mawangdui,* Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Press, 1995; Beijing: Shangwu Press, 2007.

7

Zheng Kai, Zhang Huishu and Gu Bin, *Daoist Classics in Vernacular Chinese: A Modern*

Translation of Huangdi Sijing and A Modern Translation of the Daodejing. Beijing: China Social Science Press, 1996.

8

Sawada Takio, *Huangdi Sijing*, Tokyo: Chisen Shokan Press, 2006. However the subtitle of this book is: *Unidentified Texts Prefixed to the Laozi B Manuscript Excavated from the Han Tomb.*

9

Wei Qipeng, *A Commentary on the Mawangdui Han Tomb Silk Manuscript* "*Yellow Emperor Book*." Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2004.

10

Quite a few scholars think and have explicitly concluded that these four ancient lost books form the *Huangdi Sijing*, yet there are those who suspect that the evidence for this is insufficient, and thus propose counter-opinions; for example, see Qiu Xigui's 裘錫圭 paper, "Unidentified Texts Prefixed to the Laozi B Manuscript Excavated from the Han Tomb at the Mawangdui Site are not the Huangdi Sijing," published in *Daoist Culture Studies*, vol. 3, Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press, 1993; Qiu Xigui, *The Works Before and After the Mawangdui Laozi A and B and Daoist-Legalist Schools: A Discussion on the Xinshushang and the Baixin as Works of the Schools of Shendao and Tianpian*, published in *Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, Beijing: Sanlian Shudian, 1980; Li Ling 李零, *Deciphering Huanglao*, in *Daoist Culture Studies*, vol. 5, Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Book Press, 1994; Ding Yuanming 丁原明, *An Outline of Huanglao Studies*, Jinan: Shandong University Press, 1997, pp. 8–10. Japanese scholars also take a cautious approach and do not often use the name *Huangdi Sijing*.

11

I refer to "thought related to Naming" rather than the "School of Names" because I believe that there were two kinds of "Schools of Names" in the period running from the Warring States, throughout the Qin and to the Han dynasties, one serving a political purpose and another in the sense of logic. In general, modern usage, usually the latter is referred to by the name "School of Names," whereas it was in fact the former school that held the greater influence in its time. For a more detailed treatment, see my doctoral dissertation, Cao Feng, *History of Ming Political Thought in Ancient China*, Tokyo University Doctoral Dissertation, 2004, specifically the Introduction and the third chapter "Two Kinds of Schools of Names." See also, Cao Feng, "New Approaches to Understanding the School of Names and the Study of Names" (*Social Sciences* 11 2013).

12

See Tang Lan, Chapter 3, "The Four Texts as Key Legalist Texts," in Research into the Unidentified Text Preceding the Laozi B from Mawangdui – And the Conflict Between Confucian and Legalist Traditions Seen Therein," *Archeology Review Kaogu Xuebao* 考古學報1 (1975). Some scholars followed this viewpoint, such as Wang Deyou 王德有 in his paper "The Watershed of Ancient Chinese Schools of Thought—On the Categorization of

the Huangdi Sijing as a Legalist Text," published in *Philosophical Research* 10 (October 1996). Although we cannot deny that there is some evidence of a Legalist tendency in the *Huangdi Sijing*, to directly claim this exclusive lineage is overly simplistic.

13

Chen Guying's views are succinctly stated in the Introduction to his book, which we refer to as "Chen" for short.

14

Although the term "Huang-Lao thought" has an extensive range of usage, very few pay attention to its formal definition. Zhao Jihui's 趙吉慧 *Pre-Qin China's History of Thought* (Xian: Shaanxi People's Press, 1988) says that "Huang-Lao thought is a synthesis of Daoism, Confucianism and Legalism"; In "Guodian Confucian Bamboo Slips and Warring States Huang-Lao Thought," published in *Daoist Culture Studies edition 17* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 1999) Bai Xi 白奚 explains Huang-Lao thought as follows: "In cosmology they employ Daoism, in politics they use Legalism, through the assistance of Confucianism they teach rites and music and it is also compatible with the teachings of Mohism and the school of Yinyang." This merely indicates the inclusiveness of Huang-Lao thought. Much of the current research in Huang-Lao thought, mainly uses the texts to discuss texts and people to discuss people, and lacks an intact analysis of Huang-Lao's intrinsic logical structure. With no additional effort, the author refers to Huang-Lao as the main subject of his research, and even concentrates his discussion on Huang-Lao thought, the works he employs in his discussion are varied such as the following: except for this book that refers to the *Huangdi Sijing*, also see Wu Guang 吳光, *A Comprehensive Discussion of Huang-Lao*, Hangzhou: Zhejiang People's Press, 1986; Huang Zhao 黃釗 ed. *An Outline of the History of Daoist Thought*, Changsha: Hunan Normal University Press, 1991; Chen Ligui 陳麗桂, *Huang-Lao Thought in the Warring States Period*, Taipei: Linking Publishing Co., 1991; Liu Yuhua 劉尉華 and Miao Runtian 苗潤田, *History of Jixia Academy*, Beijing: China Broadcast Television Publishing, 1992; Na Wei 那薇, *Han Dynasty Daoist Political Thought and Intuitive Understanding*, Jinan: Qilu Press, 1992; Si Xiuwu 司修武, *The Huang-Lao Doctrine and Han Dynasty Political Commentary*, Taipei: Student Press, 1992; Asano Youichi, *The Formation and Development of Huang-Lao Daoism*, Tokyo: Sopunshya Press, 1992; Wang Bo 王博, *The Characteristics of the Thought of Laozi the Historian*, Taipei: Wenjin Publishing Co., 1993; Chen Ligui 陳麗桂, *Huang-Lao Thought in Qin and Han Dynasties*, Taipei: Wenjin Publishing Co., 1997; Ding Yuanming 丁原明, *An Outline of the Huang-Lao School*, Jinan: Shandong University Press, 2005; Bai Xi 白奚, *A Study of the Jixia Academy*, Beijing: Joint Publishing Co., 1998; Hu Jiacong 胡家聰: *The Contention of the Jiaxia Academy and the New School of Huang-Lao*, Beijing: China Academy of Social Science Press, 1998; Zheng Yuanling 鄭圓鈴, *A Study of Huang-Lao Thought in the Histories*, Taipei: Student Book Press, 1998; Haga Yoshinobu, *Between Rites and Law—A Study of Political Thought in the Western Han*, Tokyo: Kyukoshoin, 2000; Zhang Zengtian, *The Method and Practice of Politics in Huang-Lao*, Guangzhou: Sun Yat Sen University Press, 2005; Zhang Xutong, 張緒通, *The Wisdom of Huang-Lao*, Beijing: People's Press, 2005; Wang Xiaobo 王曉波, *Dao and Fa (Legality): An Analysis of Legalist Thought and Huang-Lao Philosophy*, Taipei: Taiwan University Press, 2007; Liu Wenxing 劉文星, *The Art of the Noble Rulers Facing South—The Influence of Huang-Lao Thought on Pre-Qin to Mid-Western Han Body Cultivation Thinking and Political Theory*, Taipei: Culture University Press, 2008. Jin Chenghuan 金晟煥, *An Exploration into the Origins of Huang-Lao Daoism*, Beijing: China Social Science Press, 2008; Ikeda Tomohisa, Wang Qifa 王啟發 and Cao Feng 曹峰 trans. *A New Study on Daoist Thought*

—*Zhuangzi as the Focus*, vols. 1–2, Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou Guji Press, 2009.

15

See Kanaya Osamu," Research into the Unidentified Text of the "Jingfa–-"Sidu" Preceding the Laozi B from Mawangdui," in a memorial for Kaga's retirement, Literature, history and philosophy article collection, Tokyo: Kodansha Press, 1979, also appears in Kanaya Osamu, *Collection of Papers on Chinese Thought*, vol. 2, Tokyo: Hirakawa Press, 1997; Kanaya Osamu, "The Development of Fa (Law) in Pre-Qin Thought," *Collection of Papers on East-West Learning* 47 (1982), also in Kanaya Osamu *Collection of Papers on Chinese Thought* vol. 2, Tokyo: Hirakawa Press, 1997; also see Ikeda Tomohisa's Introduction to Tokyo University Collection of Research on Mawangdui Silk Manuscripts: *Research into the Unidentified Text of the "Jingfa"—"Sidu" Preceding the Laozi B from Mawangdui*, 1997.

16

Wang Bo discusses the idea of Heaven alongside that of Dao; I personally feel that this is essentially sensible. He feels that a pure conceptualization of "Dao," "In choosing to emphasize the empty and vacuous, nameless aspects of Dao, there are no actual principles in Dao itself for humankind to relate to and imitate. In which case, there must be some kind of intermediary between Dao and the myriad objects and humankind. Such an intermediary must necessarily have the specific traits which Dao lacks, as well as having the authority that the myriad objects and humankind lack, which is what we see described as the Way of Heaven." Wang Bo, ibid., p. 338.

17

Haga Yoshinobu, "Constant Laws—The Method of Thought of the Forms and Names Thinking, in Haga Yoshinobu, Between Rites and Law—A Study of Political Thought in the Western Han" (see the aforementioned), *Eastern Studies* 97 (1999).

18

Jiang Lequn 蒋樂群, "*A Study of the Terms Tianyang (*天殃*), Tiandao (*天道*) and de Tian (*得天*) in the Mawangdui Silk Manuscript 'Jingfa,'*" published by the China Research Association of Excavated Materials: *China Excavated Materials Research*, First Issue, 1997. Concerning the appearances of "Heaven's Calamities" (*Tianyang* 天殃), and "Heaven's Punishments" (*Tianzhu* 天誅) in the "Jingfa," I agree with Jiang Lequn's observation that says: "these concepts do not refer to the changes of the natural world, but merely serve as the terminology used to express the harmful consequences that the state and the ruler might run into, it is rhetorical terminology." To "obtain heaven" (*De Tian* 得天) refers to "obtaining the inevitable outcome." However since this account neglects the relationship between the Heavenly Dao and Dao, it overlooks the meaning the Heavenly Dao has in the sense of being a rule for people to follow, thus it is an insufficient explanation. Jiang Lequn's paper is in Japanese.

19

Concerning "no-name" or the nameless (*wuming*無名), the *Laozi* has: "the Dao that can be

spoken of (named) is not the constant Dao" (Chap. 1), "Dao cannot be named" (Chap. 14), "Dao is concealed in the nameless" (Chap. 41). Regarding the "formless" the *Laozi* has: "above there is no light, below it is not dark" (Chap. 14), "the thing named Dao—taste it and it has no flavor, look at it and cannot see it, listen but cannot hear it" (Chap. 35), "precede it but cannot see its beginning, follow it but cannot see its end" (Chap. 14), and "it has no shape and no form" (Chap. 14). Since it does not have a form or the appearance of a regular entity, one cannot grasp it through the senses or experience.

20

Wang Bo, ibid. Part III of Chap. 12, "Forms and Names in the Yellow Emperor's Classics," addresses this point.

21

Tokyo University Mawangdui Research Group ed. *Annotated Translation of the Chapters "Fawanglun" and "Lunyue" from the Unidentified Texts Preceding Laozi B from the Mawangdui Han Tomb*, 1999, p. 71. The original is in Japanese. Wei also interprets the phrase in terms of the equality of forms and names, translating as, "the sage who grasps the Dao in quietly observing his kingdom must thoroughly examine the origins of things, and whether or not forms and names are fitting…" ibid., p. 82.

22

The character following *ming* is unclear in the silk manuscript, however, going by the following text, "Once name (*ming*名) and form (*xing* 刑) are defined, the beings can manage themselves," I speculate that the character following *ming* might be *xing* 刑.

23

Chen Guying uses the phrases "order the state ordinarily, use the military extraordinarily" from the *Laozi* (57) and "while coming across an extraordinary situation use extraordinary methods to resolve it" from the "Tianze" (天則) chapter of the *Heguanzi* 鶡冠子, to interpret this expression, in which ordinary *zheng* 正 and extraordinary *qi* 奇 refer to two types of methods, the standard and the non-standard (alternative); and so he explains the quoted phrase as "no bias occurs in judging the concept and situation of any matter", see p. 78. Wei 魏 also interprets the quoted phrase as "the standard and non-standard means of management are applied according to the situation, each having their own position", to interpret the phrase "而名□弗去" he reads, "the titles of the myriad things are not dropped, and stability is achieved", see p. 13. This interpretation is clearly not supported by the context of the passage. The characters "zheng正" and "qi奇" appear with some frequency in the *Huangdi Sijing*, as absolutely opposite states, and not as alternative methods. The meaning of stating that both have their positions is in fact closer to, "the noble and common have constant positions, the righteous and useless do not hinder each other."

24

See Cao Feng, "A Study of the Appearance of 'Dao,' 'Ming,' and 'Fa' in the Mawangdui Han Tomb Silk Manuscript of the "'Jingfa.'" Chinese Philosophy Research Group, Tokyo University ed. *Chinese Philosophy* vol. 16, 2001, p. 21 (Japanese).

25

See Cao Feng, *History of Ming Political Thought in Ancient China*, Doctoral Thesis at Tokyo University, 2004. See also, Cao Feng, "Research into the Phenomenology of the Parallel Usage of Names and Law in the Warring States Period, Qin and Han Dynasties," *Northwest Scholarly Report* 6 (2012).

26

Yu Mingguang, 1989, 2016; see ibid.

27

In the *Qunshu Zhiyao* 群書治要 (Four Series Obari version) the explanation of "names" we find in the *Shenzi*: "Dati" (申子•大體) resembles the methods of forms and names between ruler and minister in the *Hanfeizi*; however, the "Dati" does not have the expression "forms and names." The text goes as follows: "A good ruler, if he can be compared to a body, then the minister is his arm. If the ruler is compared to a bugle horn, then the minister is his sound. The ruler grasps the root and the minister dominates the details. The ruler manages the important affairs and the minister carries out the concrete implements. The ruler decides the direction and the minister completes the ordinary affairs. The one who acts as a ruler uses a contract to supervise the minister's status (the status of the minister is defined by contract). Names are the most important thing between Heaven and Earth, they are the contract the ruler holds in his hands. To value the most important thing between Heaven and Earth and to utilize well the contract the ruler holds in his hands means to grasp every matter under Heaven … Previously, when Yao governed all under Heaven, he used names, he could grasp the proper names and therefore the realm was well governed. When Jie governed all under Heaven he also employed names, however the names he used were not proper, therefore the realm was in disorder. Thus, a good ruler attaches great importance to whether names are proper or not. The ruler manages the great affairs and ministers manage minor affairs. Employ the minister's own proposition to supervise him, monitor him and define his name [status]."

28

The negative appearing after the *Mingshi* is an incorrect addition to the text. However, this error has not been recognized by the editing body Tokyo University 1998, who felt that if it were deleted the symmetry of the passage would be compromised, so they chose to leave it in. We believe it to be an error because the meanings of "settled" and "still" are opposite.

29

The "Lun" chapter says, "Grasp the six types of methods of governing a state in order to govern all under Heaven, examine the condition of the three kinds of names in order to treat all standards, inspect whether the affairs abide by or disobey the Heavenly Dao to determine whether the ruler can be called hegemon or king and whether or not his principle can exist, understand all kinds of conditions of emptiness, reality, movement and stillness, thereby enabling one's reputation and achievements to match, to know the real situation of all under Heaven and not to be baffled, in this manner, the way of the monarch is

established." Hence we see the main argument of the subchapter, clearly "names and reality" (*mingshi*) here should be interpreted as a person's reputation and achievements.

30

For example Kanaya Osamu, "The Development of Fa (Law) in Pre-Qin Thought," Collection of Papers on East-West Learning, vol. 47, 1982. In the second volume of the *Collected Essays of Kanaya Osamu on Chinese Thought*, he states: "in the mid-4th century bce, the techniques of forms and names were emphasized by Shen Buhai, which originally referred to stabilizing the position of the ruler and confirming sovereign rule and the way it would be used to manipulate ministers." However, in the "Jingfa" chapter we see forms and names being applied in the sphere of "acting to the furthering or detriment of the kingdom, it is expected that this technique will make all policies effective. Hence it is no longer a means of overseeing and manipulating ministers alone," (pp. 443–444, original is Japanese). Asano Youichi, *The Formation and Development of Huang-Lao Daoism*, adopts a similar position, saying, "the forms-and-names thought in the 'Jingfa' section is different from the technique of 'the comparability of forms and names' employed by the Legalists, it covers a much wider area, including not only a recognition and judgment of objects, the first stage of recognition, but also value judgments on good and bad, right and wrong, the surveying of ministers according to law, and the comparison of the ruler's efficacy of rule and his reputation, as well as the fixing of the laws of the kingdom in accordance with the Way of Heaven and its movements amongst others" (p. 59, original in Japanese).

31

"The character for "minister" (*chen* 臣) following (*qi* 亓) and preceding the "imperial strategic advisor" (*mouchen* 謀臣) is an erroneous addition to the text.

32

The character that appears after the *shang* 賞 (reward) character is damaged and cannot be seen clearly. Judging by the meaning/interpretation of what comes before and after it, here it refers to something of the sort of the concrete political conduct enacted through "reward and punishment." In the "Junzheng" ("The Correct Kingship") chapter there are many instances of *shangfa* (reward and punishment); *fa* is a loan word for *fa-* punishment. Therefore we can supplement here with the character *fa*.

33

Here the original text runs king—heaven—beneath; only the "beneath" has no repeated mark, which may be an omission.

34

On this point, although in the *Huangdi Sijing* we do not see such clear statements such as we find in the *Hanfeizi*: "Zhudao" chapter: "Dao is the beginning of the myriad beings, the criterion for right and wrong," or the *Guanzi*: "Junchen Xia": "Dao is the necessity of the myriad beings, the one who is the ruler of the people must grasp and receive this necessity," the common tendency of thought is undeniable, as is seen for example in the "Daofa" chapter which begins with the phrase "Dao generates Law" (道生法).

35

In the “Daoyuan” section it says: “therefore only the sages can observe things with no form, can hear the noise with no sound. Knowing the actual contents of emptiness, only then can one arrive at the highest realm of quietness. Can merge with the *shenming* of heaven and earth, is the same as the myriad beings and there is no gap between them. Running back and forth and no remiss. Once grasping this Dao, one can become *shenming*.” The “Zhongyan” chapter of the *Lüshi Chunqiu* has: “therefore the same can hear the noise with no sound, can see the things with no form, Zhan He, Tian Zifang and Lao Dan are this kind of person.”

36

Wang Bo, *The Characteristics of Laozi as a Historian*, ibid., p. 354.

37

Regarding these two phrases, there are scholars who punctuate them differently, placing the comma after the *fa* character and thus receiving a different reading of the phrase. Here I follow Chen and Wei’s punctuation. However, Chen and Wei read “無恒” as “there is no constant virtue” which I am afraid is incorrect; here “無恒” is not “no constancy” but “abnormal,” referring to a situation where there is no political order.

38

From the image we can see the two characters “命名” very clearly, however, it is possible that 命 should have been 名, but this has not been proven yet. “無紀”、“無刑”、“無時”, should have “無名” to correspond with them.

39

Looking at the image, it seems that there are eight missing characters. Chen supplements them as “德虐之刑,靜作之時” (“regulating (the system of) reward and punishment, patterning the times for rest and plowing”) and moreover maintains that the sentence “patterning the times for rest and plowing” that comes after “serving as a model for all under Heaven” should actually be placed before. I believe that this idea is worth investigating since adding this sentence after would contradict the line of thought of this paragraph.

40

This paragraph appears in the last section of the “Shiliu Jing” and does not have a title. Chen suggests the title of “Mingxing,” however this is merely a recommendation and is not supported by significant evidence. The CASS version titles it “The Ten Great” due to the last phrase in the *Shiliu Jing* that says: “十六經凡四千□□六”,which is read as “十大, 經凡四千□□六”, and thus becomes the title of the chapter. Perhaps this is under the influence of Li Xueqin 李學勤, “The Mawangdui Silk Manuscript of the “Jingfa”: Dafen and Others,” published in *Daoist Culture Studies*, vol. 3, Shanghai, Shanghai Guji Press, 1993. It is very likely that the *Shiliu (Sixteen)* is *Shida* (*The Ten Great*); however, the

combination *Shiliujing* cannot be *Shida, jing* due to this punctuation, as it is very clear that in the image of the silk manuscript we see that these three characters appear together. Moreover, naming the final chapter “The Ten Great” has no connection to the content itself.

41

“Desire to know the reason for gains and losses, disaster and happiness, and true and false, then you must examine the forms and names of things.” Chen 陳 and Wei 魏 transcribe it as: “if you desire to know the reason for gains and losses, disaster and happiness, then you certainly must examine the forms and names of the things.” This interpretation is imprecise, reading it as “Desire to know the reason for gains and losses, disaster and happiness, and true and false” is a better reading.

42

Wang Niansun 王念孫 maintains that the phrase 正名自治之,奇身名廢” is a misinterpretation of the original “正名自治, 奇名自廢.” Note that the difference is an additional *zhi* 之 character and in the English translation it makes no difference. See Wang Niansun, *Readers Notes*, Nanjing: Jiangsu Guji Press, 2000, p. 470.

43

Guanzi: “Shuyan” chapter has a similar saying, that is: “When names are precise one can govern, names are not precise then one cannot manage the disorder, if there are no names the state will perish, therefore the ancient sage kings place much importance on names.” However the “Shuyan” chapter is a copy based on oral dictation, there is no defined line of thought. The paragraph before this one says: “There are three things that are related to humans’ names, the first is the name of government, the second is the name of ethics, the third is the name of affairs. The names of affairs have two kinds; there are names used to correct the past/previous events, and those that are used to be aware of the future. If one obtains these five kinds of names then all under heaven can be governed.” There is a definite distance from the discussion of names in this chapter.

44

In other texts we can see a similar point of view. These texts more or less have a connection to Daoist thought:“Show the people to what extent they are rich, others may come take your assets, show people how poor they are and others may come help you. Firm things are easy to break; dangerous things are likely to collapse. Things that move may wander about, things that don't move are stable. Names have the capability to manage themselves, affairs have the capability to ensure themselves. Therefore those who understand the Dao begin to govern all under heaven from names, according to the situation of the affairs they apply their management … Previously Yao used names to govern all under Heaven, once names were defined all under Heaven was also governed. Jie also used names to govern all under Heaven, however he used improper names, therefore all under Heaven was in chaos. Thus, sages value the correctness of names” (*Qunshu Zhiyao*: “Shenzi”: “Dati”).“The brilliant ruler manages the people, affairs are few yet the achievements are abundant, the body is not exhausted yet the state is governed, and speech is seldom yet the commands are implemented. The reason why affairs are few yet the achievements are abundant is because the ruler is able to grasp the root. The reason why

the body is not exhausted yet the state is governed is because the ruler is able to appoint the worthy. The reason why speech is seldom yet the commands are implemented is because the ruler is able to define the name of things. If the ruler is able to define the names, then regardless of whether one is stupid or clever, all can exhibit their own abilities. The ruler ought to grasp the Dao, enabling himself to reside in the mode of stillness, allowing the names to exhibit the capability to self-management and allowing the things to exhibit their own capability to ensure themselves. Reward and punishment are decided from names, this way among the people there is not one who dares not to revere the ruler" (*Shizi*: "Fen").

"The brilliant ruler merely sits facing south and can establish himself as the ruler of all under Heaven, clear, empty and quiet, allowing the names to display their function to manage themselves, allowing the things to decide for themselves, this is then like a mirror that can reflect objects and like a scale that can weigh bodies" (*Jiayi Xinshu*: "Daoshu").

"Sounds come out on their own, looks are displayed on their own, names can supervise themselves and language and speech restrict themselves" (*Huainanzi*: "Mucheng").

45

The text with Daoist orientation of the *Heguanzi* (*The Pheasant Cap Master*), similar to the *Huangdi Sijing* emphasizes the importance of the mode of "yet to be named" in terms of political rule. The *Heguanzi* develops the idea of "no name" to its peak, believing that the highest ruler is completely nameless. This can be best illustrated by the example of Pang Nuan talking about Bian Que (407–310 bce Warring States physician) to King Daoxiang of Zhao (245–236 bce):Pang Nuan said: "The state ruler has not heard the story about King Weiwen inquiring Bian Que? Once King Weiwen went to seek instruction from the famous doctor Bian Que: 'Your household has three brothers, all are skillful in medicine, which one of you is the best?' Bian Que said: 'My eldest brother is the best, my second brother falls short of eldest brother by a little bit, and I am the worst.' King Weiwen was puzzled and said: 'please give me details.' Bian Que explained further saying: 'when my brother treats illnesses, before the state of the illness flares up, at that time the patient is aware of his sickness, however my eldest brother prescribes medicine to eradicate the root cause of the illness, making it difficult for his medical expertise to gain acknowledgment from people, therefore he does not have a reputation, only within our family we think highly of him in the utmost possible way. When my second brother treats illnesses, it is when the illness is just beginning to arise and symptoms have yet to be completely distinct and the patient also does not feel suffering, yet my second brother can prescribe medicine to eliminate the disease, causing the people in our village to believe that my second brother only treats minor illness very effectively. When I treat illnesses, all are when the state of the illnesses are utterly critical, located in the patients' veins and channels, I use a needle to puncture and let the blood out, or in the afflicted part spreads out I use medicine—cure the ills with poison, thus enabling the sick person in the state of illness to obtain relief or cure, therefore I have a good reputation in the realm.' King Weiwen said: 'Well Said! Guanzi also employs the Dao of medicine that Bian Que has just spoken of; therefore Duke Huan of Qi can establish his hegemonic enterprise. This type of technique for treating an illness and governing a state, does not cure the illness that has already broken out, but rather applies management before the problems emerge, employing the strategy of the formless. If one waits until the contributions are complete, the people will all say that it is a result of their hard work and has no connection to the ruler." See Carine Defoort, *Heguanzi*: *Studies from the Perspective of Argumentation*. Shenyang: Liaoning Education Press, 2000. In Chap. 9, "Transcending Designations" the author gives a detailed analysis of the connection between the ruler and the nameless as described in the *Heguanzi*.

46

In the "Guan" chapter of the *Shiliu Jing* there is the phrase: "Good and evil do not have 'order' [standard], punishment and reward do not have 'forms' [regulation], rest and production do not have defined times [seasons], rank and order do not have 'names.'" Although here names and laws are not grouped together, "order," "punishment" and "time" appear side by side, therefore they can be seen as comprising the fundamental law of the state, as described above; the "Guan" chapter of the *Shiliu Jing* also contains the following: "define the names to improve the law/punishment" and "define names to implement punishments." Looking at this from the textual context, all of these statements contain the idea of carrying out and implementing the law. "Names and punishments" here all represent government edicts.

47

The phrase: "Dao generates law" can be seen in the "Xinshushang" chapter of the *Guanzi* as well: "Things need to be controlled by law, law stems from power, and the foundation of power lies in the Dao" and in the *Heguanzi*: "Binzheng": "Sages arise from among virtuous people, Dao arises from sages, the various laws arise from Dao, the marvelous arises from law, to perceive the marvelous is the ultimate outcome that arises from Dao." However these two phrases are not entirely parallel to the "Jingfa." The meaning of the *fa* character in the "Xinshushang" chapter of the *Guanzi* is narrower; it has the meaning of "criminal law," and the *quan* character means power. In the "Xinshushang" chapter, although we see the concept of Dao as the highest notion, if we compare it with the preceding phrase that says: "rites come out of righteousness, righteousness comes out of principle (*li*)," then here"Dao" and "*li*" are the same. Although we see the phrase "Dao generates law" in the "Binzheng" chapter of the *Heguanzi*, it seems to be exactly the same as the "Jingfa." However, its "Dao" comes out of "*sage*," so of course the construction of thought here is not the same. In addition, what we must point out is that although it is not clear-cut that we are talking about the relationship between Dao and *fa*, we see in many places in the *Huangdi Sijing* that the Heavenly Dao is described; that is how the principles of people are described, these "human principles" are extracted from the Heavenly Dao and cannot be disobeyed, they possess the meaning of law, of *fa.*

48

See Cao Feng, *Research into the Phenomenology of the Parallel Usage of Names and Law in the Warring States Period, Qin and Han Dynasties*, ibid.

49

This phrase is taken from Sima Tan, see *The Histories*: *The Book of the Master Grand Scribe*: *Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Six Schools*.

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